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ESSAY

ON

INSTINCT,

AND ITS

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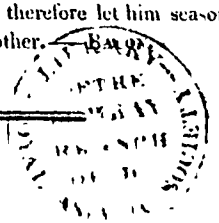
PHYSICAL AND MORAL RELATIONS.

By THOMAS HANCOCK, M.D.

For Reason raise o'er Instinct, as you can:
In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man.——POPE.

A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.——BACON.



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PREFACE.

A CONCISE view of the following argument was communicated, about two years since, to a Literary Society. Whether it appeared novel, or the subject was in itself interesting, a request was soon after conveyed to me, that it might be given to the public. In considering the subject, it was obvious, that it not only admitted of copious illustrations, but that it involved many abstract discussions more [illegible]ted to the closet than to the Lecture-room. [illegible]dingly, some of my leisure has since been [illegible]ployed in making such an arrangement of facts, illustrations, and reasonings, as, I am induced to think, will present a more clear and consistent view than was contained in the original discourses. I am, notwithstanding, fully [illegible]ware, that, in its present state, it is not without many imperfections; and yet they appear

to be such, as it is scarcely in my power to remedy. To do justice to an argument of this nature, I need not say, that the most patient thought and undivided attention would be necessary. But the time of professional men, whilst engaged in public duties, in this city, is seldom at their own command: or if any portion be at their command, it is that which the wearied mind claims for its repose rather than for active thought. The consequence has been, that I have had many interruptions to any regular plan of study. So that, instead of being able to follow up some of my reasonings closely and methodically, I have often had to lament that they were broken; and subsequently, found it no easy task to resume them. Being, also, under the necessity of seizing opportunities, as they offered, and writing, often, in a hurried and desultory manner, I fear that I have been led occasionally into some repetitions. Hence, it is possible that arguments may have been left incomplete, and the same thing may have been expressed over again in different terms. However this may be, when an author comes before the public, urged by whatever motive, he must naturally expect, that his work will be cast

mated according to *what it is*, and not according to contingencies, which might have tended to make it more or less perfect.

In so far as illustrations from Natural History were necessary to my purpose, I have not scrupled to avail myself freely of the scientific labours of others—I trust, however, with proper acknowledgments. And, though I consider the speculations in the First Part as but secondary and introductory to those in the Second, I am aware, that there is a class of readers who will give them the preference. I have therefore studied to make the former more interesting to this class, by a greater number of quotations than I should have otherwise thought necessary.

One object it has been my study to pursue, and that is, the inculcation in the minds of my younger friends, (to whom principally the outline was addressed) of, what I consider, right opinions, or at least, such opinions as agree with the fundamental principles of Revealed Religion. And as an inquiry of this nature could not well be prosecuted without something of what is called metaphysical discussion, wherever I have had occasion to tread upon this uncertain ground, I have endeavoured to

clear my path by using phrases easily understood, and avoiding questions too intricate, and subtleties too refined.

As I do not wish to anticipate any of my conclusions, I forbear to enter into a general view of the principles it is my object to support: For believing the subject to be connected in a chain of reasoning, however loosely in some parts, I have the less reluctance in requesting my reader to follow it, with what patience he may be able to exercise, to the end.

I do not flatter myself that the view I have taken is original; yet I think it, on the whole, important. Neither do I flatter myself, that the inferences I have drawn will be generally received; though I believe them to be founded in Truth. For, some of them seem to be opposed to *great* authorities; but I have satisfaction in thinking that they are not opposed to the *greater* authority of Scripture. In reference therefore to the authors with whom I differ—and I am not alone in differing from them—I can feelingly apply the often quoted saying,—Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis amica Veritas.

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PART I.

OF

THE PHYSICAL RELATIONS

OF

INSTINCT.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

MAN is especially distinguished from the lower animals by the consciousness of a Supreme Ruler of the world, and by the dominion he is enabled to exercise over the earth and its productions. He is distinguished also by the restless and insatiable desire of knowledge, the capacity to attain it, and the power to perpetuate it from one generation to another.

But, notwithstanding so wide a barrier separates him from the brute, yet the national and intellectual varieties among mankind are so great as, on a superficial view, almost to constitute specific distinctions; and to establish as near an affinity, in point of intelligence, between the lowest of these and the most sagacious brute, as between the most enlightened and ignorant of the human family. As one man differs so widely from another, we may also distinguish the wise man from the simple by the consistency of his conduct, and by the use he is accustomed to make of his acquired knowledge.

Now, the departments of human knowledge are various like the motives which actuate different persons in the pursuit. Some individuals have a natural in-

clination to one subject of inquiry, and some to another. Some seek after knowledge for gain; some for estimation in the world; some from a restless and unprofitable spirit of curiosity without limit, and almost without object; some that they may become expert in disputation; some from pride and ostentation; few, as is well observed by Lord Bacon, that they may employ the gift of reason for the benefit of the human family, and for the glory of Him who gave it. "As if," adds the same illustrious author, in that strong and figurative language for which his writings are so remarkable, adapting his metaphor to the different motives and characters of men—"as if there was sought in knowledge a couch whereon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit and sale; and not a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate."*

But, as knowledge is thus various, and may be received into minds so variously constituted and affected; how important is it that we duly consider the objects of intellectual improvement we may individually propose to ourselves, and the motives by which we are actuated in the search!

We may admit the saying of Locke, that "this life is a scene of vanity," and perhaps may bring our-

* Advancement of Learning, book, i.

selves to comprehend the acknowledgment of Grotius, one of the most illustrious scholars of his age, and a man of exemplary piety, that "he had consumed much of his life in laboriously doing nothing."—We may have dipped so far into philosophy as to be persuaded of this truth, that the greatest attainments in natural knowledge are immeasureably insignificant, when compared with the proper business of life; and unspeakably vain, when inflating the proud mind to search into the counsels of omniscience.—We may have been instructed, also, by the experience of the wisest and best, how little, after all our inquiries, can be known. Yet the advances which have been made in the sciences, strictly so called, viewed abstractedly as evidences of the unassisted powers of Man, of his superiority to the Brute, and his relation to some higher sphere of existence, while they ennoble human genius, urge us to lament its misapplication.

But even in the sciences, (where demonstration, as in Mathematics, and analysis and synthesis, as in Chemistry, prove the proposition and the law,) we must still come to something which is not revealed,—some link in the chain of natural causes, where the philosophic inquirer must rest, and infer an agency whose mode of working is unknown.

When Sir Isaac Newton had discovered that it was by the law of gravitation the planetary motions were to be explained, he doubtless saw it would be a vain speculation to inquire in what manner this gravitating principle or law acted; whether by an electrical

æther, or impalpable aerial fluid, or by some other subtile medium. And, in the same way, we may reasonably conclude that it will ever be fruitless to inquire whether, in the human body, a nervous fluid or a mere vibration conveys the impulse of the will to the voluntary muscles, or the impression of the senses to the brain. The profoundest researches of the physiologist cannot explain how a man performs the simple act of raising his arm, nor how the eye and ear transmit their respective sensations to the mind.

In every department of human knowledge, therefore, there is a point where inquiry must rest; and where it becomes the true philosopher to contemplate in awful humility the wonders of Almighty Power, adoring in silent reverence that infinite wisdom, which has only unlocked, as it were, to man, the vestibule of the great Temple, that contains thousands of Nature's secrets yet unopened, and thousands more, perhaps, never to be revealed.

Now, in this view, it must be considered highly incumbent upon all, who prosecute physical or moral inquiries, to direct them in the plain and simple path of observation, which may lead to profitable results; and equally incumbent to avoid the giddy heights of speculation, where the mind is too much disposed to look down upon the laborious inquirer, and to indulge in vain conceits of superior intelligence. For, hence arise the evils of a wild untutored imagination, —that roving faculty of the mind, which is to be found

any where but at home. It is ready to grasp at the notions of others, calling them its own; and to grasp at its own phantoms, calling them realities. How necessary that it should be bridled, and brought within the limits of sober and legitimate investigation! We may take it for granted, that knowledge, which is so readily gleaned from others, does not properly constitute mental improvement. The cultivation of the mind, in order that it may bring forth good fruit, requires a steady persevering labour. It is true, indeed, that some soils, from a kind of native luxuriance, produce abundantly, with but little outward aid; but, in these as much labour is often required to check an extravagant growth, and to root up the weed, as in ground which is less fertile, to manure and water in its season.

Knowledge must be conveyed to the mind, as food to the body, if it be intended for profit, by healthy digestion and assimilation of the materials to our actual substance. It is by reflection and meditation upon the truths afforded by others, that we make them our own; and this observation applies to our moral and religious, as it does to our intellectual, advancement.

Hence it is that the man who can boast little else than a capacious memory, though his mind may be stored with the records of past ages, is often extremely deficient in the faculty of Reason, and in common discretion, when placed in the embarrassing concerns of life: while he who may want this prompt

recollection of the past, but is notwithstanding possessed of a sound discriminating judgment, and can recur in every emergency to a counsellor placed in his own bosom,—who troubles himself little in considering how others would act in similar circumstances, will frequently extricate himself from difficulties, by which the other would be overwhelmed. So much, therefore, does it behove every one to labour for his own supplies, whether physical or moral; and so great is the distinction between that which is received from without, and that which is produced within,—between the observations of others and our own,—between that which makes the heart better, and that which only fills the head,—in a word, between wisdom and knowledge.

Cowper has very accurately marked the distinction.

" Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have ofttimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere material with which Wisdom builds,
'Till smooth'd and squared and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich:
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much,
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more."

Task, Book 6.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL VIEW OF DIFFERENT WRITERS OPINIONS ON THE SUBJECT: THE ARRANGEMENT PROPOSED. INSTINCT CONTRASTED WITH REASON.

SECT. I.

General view of different Writers opinions on the Subject: the Arrangement proposed.

IN surveying the diversified classes of phenomena, which are presented to the view in the wide field of Natural History, none appear more interesting than the acts of the Brute creation. It is natural therefore to compare these acts, which have generally been supposed to result from a peculiar principle, named Instinct, with the operations of Human Reason.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that very confused notions exist upon this subject, not only in the works of the learned, but in the minds of the multitude; some referring the actions of the Brute exclusively to Instinct, and the actions of Man exclusively to Reason; some considering the boundaries of these principles perfectly distinct, yet too nice to be ascertained; and others, of no mean authority, asserting, that there is no difference between them,—one set

of writers classing Reason among the Instincts, and another set maintaining that every act of the lower animals is an act of Reason, such, in kind, as it is exhibited in Man. Now, we may observe, that obscurity, in a greater or less degree, has been cast over every subject, when men have stepped beyond the proper business of philosophy in explaining causes or hidden operations, and establishing specific distinctions often depending on words, instead of classifying or arranging facts. Without pretending that I shall be able to throw any new light upon so intricate a subject, in which, it is obvious, there is a great deal that is never likely to be understood; I shall endeavour to distinguish and classify the phenomena in question, according to the most impartial view I may be qualified to take, and the best means of information within my reach.

The arrangement, therefore, which I propose to myself in the elucidation of the subject, will comprise the following considerations: *viz.* 1st. How far Reason appears to differ from Instinct. 2ndly. How far the actions of some Brutes may be entitled to the appellation of Reasoning. And 3rdly, how far the perfect Instinct of the lower animals bears an analogy to that most exalted principle in Man, by which we are taught to believe, that his nature is capable of being dignified. I shall, therefore, bring forward some facts and illustrations from Natural History, in order to show, that there is a power which operates in the physical economy of brute animals

with consummate wisdom; not only adapting the structure to their peculiar habits, and to the climate, element, and situation in which they are designed to live; but directing them with wonderful precision in the choice of food, and in the care and preservation of their offspring, by many complicated labours. I shall endeavour to point out the difference *in effect*, between this power and the variable and inconstant operations of human Reason; and shall consider the evidence we have of Reasoning in the lower animals, and of Instinct in Man.

In looking downwards from man, and surveying what may be called his physical relation to the inferior works of creation, I shall notice the analogy that appears to subsist between the operations of instinct, and the laws of brute and organized matter, exhibited in gravitation and in the *unconscious* motions of vegetable and animal life. We shall thus have grounds for considering, how far man seems to answer the end and design of his existence, as a *rational* being, compared with the inferior orders of animated nature, which are accounted *irrational* or governed by instinct.

But in looking upwards from man, and surveying his higher and moral, or, as they may be termed, his spiritual relations, we shall consider, if Reason is so inadequate to procure the present happiness of man, and preserve order and harmony in the world, what means and power it possesses to procure an intimate knowledge of the Creator, and the final reward of

eternal happiness. If it should indeed be found to be insufficient, it might be fair to inquire what principle it is, by whose operation and influence man is brought to a nearer acquaintance with his Maker, instructed in his duties, and enabled to perform them.

For most of the facts I am to produce, relative to the instinct of animals, I shall be indebted to several writers on Natural History and Physiology.

Des Cartes, with some other philosophers, imagined that all the actions of the lower animals might be explained by the simple laws of mechanism. Hence he considers them as machines wholly devoid of life and sentiment, like a clock or orrery, but so curiously constructed by the Creator, that the mere impressions of light, sound, and other external agents on their organs of sense, produced a series of motions in them, and caused them to execute those various operations which had before been ascribed to an internal principle of life.

Buffon partly adopts the opinion of Des Cartes, but admits the brute animals to have life, and the faculty of distinguishing between pleasure and pain, together with a strong inclination to the one, and aversion to the other. By these inclinations and aversions he undertakes to account for all, even the most striking operations of animals.

Other philosophers, as Helvetius and Darwin, have endeavoured to show that most of the actions of brutes were performed by a process of reasoning analogous to that in man.*

* Rees Cyclop. Art. Instinct.

In a new system of Natural History of Animals, published at Edinburgh in 1791, it is laid down that "the laws of analogical reasoning do not justify the opinion, that the brutes act, on any occasion, absolutely without design." And, on the other hand, it has been maintained by Smellie, in his Philosophy of Natural History; "that between reason and instinct there is no difference, and that the reasoning faculty is itself the necessary result of instinct."

Some have considered that a material structure, or simple arrangement of organs, endowed with the principle of life, or living organic structures possessing vital properties, give rise to all the phenomena of which we see the brutes to be capable; and that it is not necessary to have recourse to a principle which they affirm to be mysterious and inexplicable like that of Instinct: and others, as I before stated, in attempting to raise the dignity of human nature far above the brute, without giving themselves any trouble to analyse their respective actions, have thought to establish the grand distinction, by assigning exclusively to man the faculty of Reason, and exclusively to the brute, the blind or unerring principle of Instinct.

We may perhaps find that all these philosophers have pushed their conclusions too far, by attempting to generalise too much; and while we are almost compelled to smile at some of their notions, we cannot but believe that some of them erred in seeking to mark distinctions between the structure and nature of the

human and the brute animal, without knowing much, if any thing, more, either of one or the other, than was to be learned by their respective actions.

For, the principle in matter by which a stone falls to the ground, and the principle in mind, by which a living organized intelligent being thinks and acts, as in man, are equally unknown. Consequently, all the principles or modifications of action, between these extremes, in minerals, vegetables, insects, reptiles, fishes, birds and beasts, are entirely hidden from our keenest search. So that Gravitation, Crystallization, Vegetation, Irritability, Sensation, Instinct, &c. are words used to denote certain effects, the causes of which we are ignorant. It is therefore vain to agitate metaphysical questions about diversities or similitudes, which depend more upon our own words than upon any clear knowledge we can have of the things we define; as, whether brutes differ from man in degree or in kind, whether there be an essential distinction between the rational and animal nature, and whether a being capable of subduing all, is only raised a single step above one or two of the higher species of brutes ;—inquiries better fitted for scholastic exercises, (about which much may be said, and but little can be known,) than for the improvement of knowledge.

The observations of Smellie on this point, though he has drawn conclusions on others which can scarcely be admitted, are worth our attention.

"It cannot," says he, "escape observation that all

the sagacity and laborious industry exerted in the various instances of animal architecture, have one uniform tendency. They are all designed for the multiplication, protection, and nourishment of offspring. But many of them are so artful, and require such persevering labour, that the human mind is bewildered when it attempts to account for them. Recourse has been had by Des Cartes, Buffon, and other philosophers, to conformation of body and mechanical impulse. Their reasonings, however, though often ingenious, involve the subject in tenfold obscurity. We can hardly suppose that the animals actually foresee what is to happen, because, at first, they have not had even the aid of experience; and particularly in some of the insect tribes the parents are dead, before the young are produced. Pure instincts of this kind, therefore, must be referred to another source. In a chain of reasoning concerning the operations of nature, such is the constitution of our minds, that we are under the necessity of resorting to an ultimate cause. What that cause is, it is the highest presumption in man to define. But, though we must for ever remain ignorant of the cause, we are enabled to trace, and even to understand, partially, some of the effects; and from these effects we perceive the most consummate wisdom, the most elegant and perfect contrivances, to accomplish the multifarious and wonderful intentions of nature. In contemplating the operations of animals, from man down to the seemingly most contemptible insect,

we are necessarily compelled to refer them to pure instinct, or original qualities of mind, variegated by nature according as the necessities, preservation, and continuation of the different species require. Let any man try to proceed a step farther, and, however he may deceive himself, and flatter his own vanity, he must find at last that he is clouded in obscurity, and that men who have a more correct and unprejudiced mode of thinking, will brand him with absurdity, and acting in direct opposition to the constitution and frame of the human mind." *

Sect. II.

Instinct contrasted with Reason.

On surveying the actions of Men and Brutes, there seem to be sufficient logical grounds for making two grand distinctions; the one, comprising those actions which appear to be done blindly or without premeditation and without experience; and the other, those which are done with forethought by combining means to accomplish ends, which are often the result of individual or social experience and instruction.

These general facts seem to be so obvious, that they lead us at once to call them by different names, and to conclude that they arise from different pro-

* See Philos. of Nat. Hist, vol. ii. p. 118.

pensities or faculties: and the words Instinct and Reason come up as nearly to the view of the case as any others we could employ. Hence, while Reason acts with intelligence and design, (variably indeed and inconstantly,) profiting by experience, comparing motives, balancing probabilities, looking forward to the future and adapting itself to every change of circumstance; Instinct operates with uniformity in all individuals of the same species, and performs its office with unerring certainty, prior to all experience.

It is proper for me here to remark, that the word Reason is used in senses which are extremely different; sometimes to express the whole of those powers which elevate man above the brutes, and constitute what is called his rational nature; more especially, perhaps, his intellectual powers; and sometimes to express the power of deduction or argumentation. The former is the sense in which the word is used in common discourse. It is in the latter restricted sense, as indeed is implied a little above, that I wish the word Reason to be understood, wherever it occurs in this Essay, viz. the discursive faculty, wholly depending on outward evidence for its conclusions.* Hence, if there be any actions which are performed with every indication of design, forethought, and wisdom, which are not the result of instruction nor of individual experience, but of a power operating above the consciousness of the creature, and directing it with unerring certainty to some

* See Outlines of Moral Philosophy by Stewart, Sect. 9.

specific ends by means far beyond its comprehension, whether in man or in the brute; these actions are *instinctive*. And on the other hand, if there be any actions, which evidently result from observation and instruction, indicating an intelligent power of combining means and adapting them to ends of which the creature is conscious; these actions come within the province of *Reason*.

According to this view of the subject, we shall find, that Man himself, more especially the human infant, is not without his instincts; which immediately tend to the preservation of his existence, at times, when Reason, either from its tardy growth or want of promptitude, and general inefficiency, would be unable to superintend the different offices of the animal economy, for which the former are appointed.

CHAPTER II.

EXAMPLES OF INSTINCT IN THE WORKS OF ANIMALS, AND THE CARE OF THEIR YOUNG; AND IN THEIR CHOICE OF FOOD.—REMARKS ON THE ADAPTATION OF STRUCTURE TO CLIMATE, AND ADAPTATION OF HABIT AND DISPOSITION TO STRUCTURE, &c.

SECT. I.

Examples of Instinct in the Works of Animals, and the Care of their Young.

"THE works of animals, says Dr. Reid, present us with a wonderful variety of instincts; the nests of birds so similar in their situation and architecture in the same kind, so various in different kinds; the webs of spiders; the ball of the silk worm; the nests of ants and other mining animals; the combs of wasps, hornets, and bees; the dams and houses of beavers.

"But while every manufacturing art among men was invented by some man, improved by others, and brought to perfection by time and experience, and known only to those who have been taught them; in

the arts of animals no individual can claim the invention. Every animal of the species has equal skill from the beginning, without teaching, without experience or habit. *Every one has its art by a kind of inspiration;* not that it is inspired with the principles or rules of the art, but with the ability and inclination of working in it to perfection, without any knowledge of its principles, rules, or end.

"The youngest pair of birds, it is known, without instruction or experience, build their first nest of the materials commonly used by their species; in situations too most secure and convenient for incubation and the rearing of their young."* This cannot be imitation; for, as Addison says, "Though you hatch a crow under a hen, and never let it see any of the works of its own kind, the nest it makes shall be the same, to the laying of a stick, with all the other nests of the same species. It cannot be reason: for were animals endued with it to as great a degree as man, their buildings would be as different as ours, according to the different conveniencies that they would propose to themselves." †

The work of every animal is, like the works of nature, perfect in its kind, and can bear the most critical examination of the mechanic or the mathematician. Let us take an example from the Bee. Dr. Reid further remarks, that "there are only three possible figures of the cells which can make them all

* Reid's Essays, vol. iii. chap. I. † Spectator, vol. ii.

equal and similar, without any useless interstices. These are the equilateral triangle, the square, and the regular hexagon. Mathematicians know that there is not a fourth way possible, in which a plane may be cut into little spaces that shall be equal, similar, and regular without useless spaces. Of the three figures, the hexagon is the most proper for conveniency and strength. Bees, as if they knew this, make their cells regular hexagons."

But the bottom of each cell rests upon the partitions between the cells on the other side, which serve as a buttress to strengthen it; and this gives it all the strength possible.

"Again, it has been demonstrated that, by making the bottoms of the cells to consist of three planes meeting in a point, there is a saving of material and labour no way inconsiderable. The bees, as if acquainted with these principles of solid geometry, follow them most accurately. It is a curious mathematical problem, at what precise angle the three planes which compose the bottom of a cell ought to meet, in order to make the greatest possible saving, or the least expense, of material and labour. This is one of the problems which belong to the higher parts of mathematics. It has accordingly been resolved by some mathematicians, particularly by the ingenious Maclaurin, by a fluxionary calculation, which is to be found in the Transactions of the Royal Society of London. He has determined precisely the angle required, and he found by the most exact mensuration

the subject would admit, that it is the very angle in which the three planes in the bottom of the cell of a honey-comb do actually meet."

It has been therefore demonstrated, (as far as geometry and mathematics can show it,) that Bees build their cells in the strongest possible manner; and with the least possible expense of labour and materials. And hence it is proved, that on the supposition that they act with a view to consequences, they are more skilled in geometry and mathematics, than the most philosophical and learned men, and that too from the earliest ages. "We must therefore conclude that, although the Bees act geometrically, yet they understand neither the rules nor the principles of the arts which they practise so skilfully; and that the geometry is not in the Bee, but in the great Geometrician who made the Bee, and made all things in number, weight, and measure." *

Now when we see that animals, by Instinct, arrive at once to perfection in their art, while man is left to the exercise of his Reason, in other words, to his own skill and ingenuity, and very slowly attains to perfection, we must conclude that the former are guided by a more perfect wisdom than the latter, at least in these outward concerns of life.

In the second volume of the Spectator, Addison has taken a view somewhat similar, which illustrates not only the difference between Instinct and Reason, but the perfection of the former in its operations.

* See Reid's Essay, and Rees's Cyclopædia, art. Instinct.

He observes, "Animals in their generation are wiser than the sons of men; but their wisdom is confined to a few particulars, and lies in a very narrow compass. Take a brute out of his instinct, and you find him wholly deprived of understanding. To use an instance that comes often under observation.

"With what caution does the hen provide herself a nest in places unfrequented, and free from noise and disturbance? When she has laid her eggs in such a manner as she can cover them, what care does she take in turning them frequently, that all parts may partake of the vital warmth? When she leaves them to provide for her necessary sustenance, how punctually does she return before they have time to cool and become incapable of producing an animal? In the summer you see her giving herself greater freedoms, and quitting her care for above two hours together; but in winter, when the rigour of the season would chill the principles of life, and destroy the young one, she grows more assiduous in her attendance, and stays away about half the time. When the birth approaches, with how much nicety and attention does she help the chick to break its prison? not to take notice of her covering it from the injuries of the weather, providing it proper nourishment, and teaching it to help itself; nor to mention her forsaking the nest, if, after the usual time of reckoning the young one does not make its appearance. A chemical operation could not be followed with greater art or diligence than is seen in the hatching of a

chick; though there are many other birds that show an infinitely greater sagacity in all the forementioned particulars.

"But at the same time, the hen, that has all this seeming ingenuity, which is indeed absolutely necessary for the propagation of the species, considered in other respects, is without the least glimmerings of thought or common sense. She mistakes a piece of chalk for an egg, and sits upon it in the same manner; she is insensible of any increase or diminution in the number of those she lays; she does not distinguish between her own and those of another species; and when the birth appears of never so different a bird, will cherish it for her own. In all these circumstances, which do not carry an immediate regard to the subsistence of herself or species, she is a very idiot."

With reference to such examples of pure instinct, Addison says, that there is not, in his opinion, "any thing more mysterious in nature than this instinct in animals, which thus rises above reason, and falls infinitely short of it." And he seems to consider it "the immediate direction of Providence, and such an operation of the Supreme Being, as that which determines all the portions of matter to their proper centre." A modern philosopher, quoted by Bayle in his learned Dissertation on the souls of Brutes, delivers the same opinion, though in a bolder form of words, where he says, 'Deus est anima brutorum,' God himself is the soul of brutes."

"For my own part," he concludes, "I look upon Instinct as upon the principle of gravitation in bodies, which is not to be explained by any known qualities, inherent in the bodies themselves, nor from any laws of mechanism, but, *according to the best notions of the greatest philosophers*, is an immediate impression from the first Mover, and the divine energy acting in the creatures." *

Sect. II.

Of Instinct in Animals in their choice of Food.

In a sketch like the present, it cannot but be interesting to the lover of truth, to see and compare together the opinions of different eminent writers, especially when they coincide. I shall therefore have recourse to them as often and use them as freely, as may appear necessary; because they will afford me, if not more solid, at least more satisfactory grounds, than my own limited observations could do, for the subsequent reasonings which I shall build upon them. Hence I shall consider them as facts not only well attested, but as grave authorities to which I shall appeal, in drawing some conclusions that do not appear to have suggested themselves to the writers in question.

* Spectator, vol. ii. No. 120.

If we would take another view of the wonderful manner in which pure instinct operates, we may turn our attention to the choice which different animals make of plants for food, prior to all experience,—plants which are poisonous to other animals; avoiding whatever is noxious or unwholesome to themselves.

Smellie remarks that there is hardly a plant that is not rejected as food by some animals, and ardently desired by others. The horse yields the common water hemlock to the goat, and the cow the long-leafed water hemlock to the sheep. The goat, again, leaves the aconite, or wolf's bane, to the horse. The euphorbia, or spurge, so noxious to man, is greedily devoured by some of the insect tribes.* The Indian buceros feeds to excess on the colubrina, or nux vomica, used in this country as a poison for rats; and the land crab on the berries of the hippomane, or manchineel tree. The leaves of the broad-leafed kalmia are feasted upon by the deer, and the round-horned elk, but are mortally poisonous to sheep, to horned cattle, to horses, and to man. The bee extracts honey without injury from the flower of this plant, but the man who partakes of that honey, after it is deposited in the hive-cells, falls a victim to his repast. In the autumn and winter of the year 1790, at Philadelphia, extensive mortality was occasioned among those who had eaten of the honey collected in the neighbourhood of that city, or had feasted on the common American pheasant, or pinnated grous, as

* Smellie, vol. *i*, p. 350.

we call it. The attention of the American government was excited by the general distress; a minute examination into the cause of the mortality ensued; and it was satisfactorily shewn that the honey had been chiefly extracted from the flowers of the kalmia latifolia, and that the pheasants which had proved thus poisonous, had fed harmlessly on its leaves. The consequence was, that a public proclamation was issued, prohibiting the use of the pheasant as a food for that season.*

Dampier, in his travels, tells us, that when seamen are thrown upon any of the unknown coasts of America, they never venture upon the fruit of any tree, how tempting soever it may appear, unless they observe that it is marked with the pecking of birds; but fall on without any fear or apprehension where the birds have been before them.†

But as what nourishes birds may be injurious to man, this cannot always be a safe guide.

The following passage from St. Pierre conveys an interesting illustration of the same subject in his own animated style, and concludes with a simple and happy allusion to the varied working of that power, which is ever performing its wonders in the creation.

"The sluggish cow pastures in the cavity of the valley; the bounding sheep on the declivity of the hill; the scrambling goat browses among the shrubs of the rock; the duck feeds on the water plants of the river; the hen, with attentive eye, picks up every

* Oration by Dr. Mason Good, p. 24. † Spectator, vol. ii.

grain that is lost in the field: the pigeon, on rapid wing, collects a similar tribute from the refuse of the grove; and the frugal bee turns to account even the small dust on the flower; there is no part of the earth where the whole vegetable crop may not be reaped. Those plants which are rejected by one, are a delicacy to another; and even among the finny tribes contribute to their fatness. The hog devours the horse-tail and henbane; the goat the thistle and the hemlock. All return in the evening to the habitation of man, with murmurs, with bleatings, with cries of joy, bringing back to him the delicious tribute of innumerable plants, transformed by a process the most inconceivable, into honey, milk, butter, eggs, and cream."

Sect. III.

Of the adaptation of Structure to Climate, &c.

The nice adaptation of their instincts to the situation in which different animals are placed, is itself a sign of superior wisdom and power, operating in them for their well-being.

Thus the animals of the torrid zone, as the monkey, the elephant, and the rhinoceros, feed upon vegetables that grow in hot countries, and therefore in these they have their allotted bounds. The rein-deer is fixed in the coldest part of Lapland, because its

chief food is the lichen, or moss, which grows there more abundantly than in any other country.

The camel frequents the sandy and burning deserts in order to feed on the dry camel's hay: and here in reference to this animal, we may exclaim—how wonderfully has the Creator contrived for him! He is confined to the deserts, where oftentimes no water is to be found for many days. All other animals would perish with thirst, while the camel feels no inconvenience; being furnished with numerous cells in his stomach where he keeps water, as in a reservoir, fresh and perfectly good for a long time together; it is said even 10 or 12 days. The Arabians consider the camel as a gift sent from heaven, a sacred animal, without whose assistance they could neither subsist, nor travel. The milk of the camel is their common food. They also eat its flesh; and of its hair they make garments. Where shall we find his equal but in the rein-deer of the north? The inhabitants of Lapland have little dependence on the fruits of the earth. They neither sow nor reap. Their comparative riches consist in the number of rein-deer. Their chief nourishment is derived from the flesh and milk of these animals; with the milk also they make cheese; the skin serves for clothing; the hair for fur; the horns and hoofs for glue; the sinews are split into thread which is very strong: bow-strings are made of the tendons; and the bones are manufactured into spoons.

Another instance of the beneficent care of the Creator may be noticed in the broad palmated horns,

or brow-antlers, bending forwards, with which the face of the rein-deer is nearly covered: for, it has been suggested, that were it not for this structure of the horns the poor animal would perish in the midst of plenty: as it is thus enabled to get at a sufficient quantity of its favourite moss, which lies buried during the winter at the bottom of the snow; and we can thus account for a circumstance that would otherwise appear singular: namely, that contrary to the nature of all other deer, the female is furnished with horns as well as the male.*

Lawrence observes, that there are instances, in which whole tribes of human beings depend for the supply of all their wants, on one or two species of animals. "The Greenlander, and the Esquimaux of Labrador, placed in a region of almost constant snow and ice, where intense cold renders the soil incapable of producing any articles of human sustenance, are fed, clothed, and lodged from the seal. The flesh and blood of the seal are their food; the blubber, or sub-cutaneous stratum of fat, affords them the means of procuring light and heat; the bones and teeth are converted into weapons, instruments, and various ornaments; the skin not only supplies them with clothing, but with the coverings of their huts and canoes. The stomach, intestines, and bladder, when dried, are turned to many and various uses: in their nearly transparent dry state they supply the place of glass in the windows; they form bladders for their

* See Smellie, Linnæus, Church, &c.

harpoons, arrows, nets, &c.; when sewed together they make under garments, curtains, &c.; and are employed in place of linen on many occasions. Thus every part of the animal is converted, by a kind of domestic anatomy, to useful purposes, even to the tendons, which, when split and dried, form excellent threads. The Tschutski, the north-west Americans, the Aleutians, and other neighbouring islanders, as well as the Greenlanders, surprise us by manufacturing thread from the carcase of the whale; splitting the fibres of its cutaneous muscle into lengths of a hundred feet or more; and preparing from it a double-threaded twine, which, in the united requisites of fineness and strength, will bear comparison with any productions of European industry.*

An instance of very wonderful adaptation in the physical economy of two insects of different species is recorded in the history of the ant.

It is well known that many insects become torpid in extreme cold; and that in this state they require no food. Ants present a remarkable exception to this rule: for they are not benumbed till the thermometer has sunk to 27° of Fahrenheit, or 5° below freezing. They therefore need a supply of provision through the greatest part of winter.

Now, it is singular that the principal resource of the ant is the honey of another insect called the aphis, an insect which abounds on the plants that are usually found in the vicinity of ant-hills. This honey is an

* See Lectures on Zoology, &c. by W. Lawrence, F.R.S. p. 44.

exudation from the body of the aphis, and is absorbed greedily by the ants without any detriment to the insect that yields it. It is voluntarily given out by the aphis when solicited to do so by the ant. A single aphis supplies many ants with a plentiful meal.

Now, it is a striking example of the coincidence or wise harmony subsisting in nature, *that the aphis becomes torpid at precisely the same temperature as the ant.*

Some species of ants, we are told, bring the *aphides* to their own nests, instead of seeking them when the cold is excessive; and lodge them near the vegetables on which they feed: while the domestic ants prevent them stirring out, guarding them with great care, and defending them as their own young.

They even collect the eggs of the aphis; and superintend their hatching; continually moistening them with their tongue, and preserving them till the proper season for their exclusion; and in a word, bestow all the attention which they give to the eggs of their own species.

The ants defend them from the ants of other societies.

That they have some notions of property in these insects would appear from their occasionally having establishments for their *aphides* at a distance from the city, in fortified buildings, which they construct for this purpose alone, in places which are secure from invasion. Here the *aphides* are confined as cows in a dairy, to supply the wants of the metropolis.*

* See Huber on Ants, and Edinb. Review. vol. xx, p. 156.

Lawrence justly observes, "that we must take refuge either in verbal quibbles, or in exaggerated and unreasonable scepticism, if we refuse to recognize in the relation between peculiarity of structure and function those designs and adaptations of *exalted power and wisdom*, in testimony of which all nature cries aloud through all her works."

"I shall be contented," he adds, "with two illustrations, which, although different from each other, are analagous in their purpose. The large cavities of birds, and the interior of their bones are filled with air; thus they are rendered light and buoyant; capable of raising themselves into the higher regions of the atmosphere, of sustaining themselves with little effort in this rare medium, and cleaving the skies with wonderful celerity. Humboldt saw the enormous vulture of the Andes, the majestic condor, dart suddenly from the bottom of the deepest vallies to a considerable height above the summit of Chimboraço, where the barometer must have been lower than ten inches. He frequently observed it soaring at an elevation six times higher than that of the clouds in our atmosphere. This bird, which reaches the measure of 14 feet with the wings extended, habitually prefers an elevation, at which the mercury of the barometer sinks to about 16 inches.

"The mammalia, which live entirely, or principally in the sea, as the whale kind, the walrus, the manata, and the seal, are rendered buoyant in this dense fluid by a thick stratum of fat laid over the

whole body under the skin. From this, which is called blubber, the whale and seal oil are extracted. The object of this structure in lightening these huge creatures, and facilitating their motions, is obviously the same as that of the air-cells in birds in relation to the element they inhabit."*

Naturalists tell us, that the pelican chooses dry and desert places to lay her eggs; but like the camel, she is formed for the wilderness. When her young are hatched, she is compelled to bring them water from great distances. For this purpose Providence has furnished her with a very large bag under the lower mandible of her bill, which she fills with a quantity of water sufficient for many days. (Some will hold from 10 to 20 quarts.) This water she pours into the nest, which is usually hollowed in the ground, to refresh her young, and to teach them to swim. And it is said, on good authority, that lions, tigers, and other rapacious animals resort to her nest to quench their thirst, but do no hurt to the young.

Sect. IV.

Adaptation of habit and disposition to structure.

I shall in this place insert a few remarks taken from some eminent physiologists, by Herder, on the adaptation of the structure of beasts to their habits and dispositions, instanced in the elephant, the lion, and the

* Lectures on Zoology, &c.

sloth. They are somewhat abridged from the work of this author on the Philosophy of Man, but display the glow and colouring for which the German writers are distinguished.

" The elephant, shapeless as he seems, displays physiological grounds enough of his superiority to other beasts, and resemblance to man. His brain indeed is not very large in proportion to the size of the animal, but it bears a striking resemblance to that of man. The cranium is small in proportion to the head, because the nostrils extend far over the brain, and fill the cavities of the forehead with air, at once to afford an extensive surface for the strong muscles that move the ponderous jaw, and to spare the creature an insupportable burthen of solid bone. The nerves of the animal are chiefly spent on the organs of the finer senses, and his trunk alone receives as many as the whole bulk of his vast body. The trunk is the organ of a delicate feeling, an acute smell, and the freest motion. In it, therefore, many senses are combined and assist each other. The expressive eye of the elephant, like no other animal, but man, is provided with hairs, and a delicate motion in the lower eye-lid, and has the finer senses for its neighbours: and these are separated from the taste which governs other beasts. The mouth, which forms the predominant part of the visage in most other beasts, particularly of the carnivorous kind, is here almost concealed. The weapons of defence, the tusks, are distinct from the organs of nutrition; he is not

formed, therefore, for savage voracity. Though his bowels are necessarily large, his stomach is small and simple, so that probably raging hunger cannot torment him as it does beasts of prey. Peaceably and cleanly he crops the herb, and as his smell is separate from his mouth, he employs in this more time and caution. For the same caution has nature fashioned him in drinking, and in every other function of his massy structure; no sexual appetite inflames him with rage. The periods of his life, during which he grows, is in vigour, and decays, resemble those of man; his hearing is so delicate, that besides music of which he is passionately fond, he can understand human language in fine discrimination of the tones of command and of the passions. His ears are larger than those of any other animal, thin and extended on all sides; and the whole of the small occiput is a cave of echo, filled with air. Thus nature has wisely diminished the weight of the animal, and united the strongest muscular force with the most refined nervous economy: by which he is distinguished for sagacious quiet, and intelligent purity of sense.

"How different a king of beasts is the lion! Nature has established his throne on muscular force, not on mildness and superior intellect. His brain is small, and his nerves so weak, that they are not even proportionate to those of a cat: while his muscles are large and strong, so fixed as to produce the greatest force, instead of diversity and delicacy of motion. One great muscle that lifts the neck; a muscle of the

forefoot which serves to grasp; the joint of the foot close to the claws; these large and curved, so that their points cannot be blunted, as they never touch the earth:—these were his gifts for the purposes of life. His stomach is long, and much curved; its friction and his hunger, therefore, must be fearful. The cavities of the heart are longer and broader than in man, the *parietès* twice as thin, and the aorta twice as small; so that the blood of the lion, as soon as it quits the heart, flows with four times the velocity, and in the small branches with a hundred times that of the human circulation. The heart of the elephant on the contrary beats slowly, almost as much so, as in cold-blooded animals. The broad tongue of the lion is furnished with prickles an inch and half long, lying on the fore part, with their points directed backwards; hence the danger of his licking the skin, which immediately fetches blood, and excites his thirst of it. As the tongue tastes acutely, and his fiery hunger is a kind of thirst, it is natural that he should have no appetite for putrid carrion. To kill his own food, to suck the warm blood, is his royal taste. Benevolent nature has blunted his senses; his eye is afraid of fire, and cannot even bear the sun; his scent is not acute, the situation of his muscles only fitting him for great springs, not for running, and nothing putrid excites him. His forehead is small, compared with his ravenous jaws and masticating muscles; his nose large and long; his neck and fore legs of amazing strength;

his mane and the muscles of his tail ample; but his hinder parts are more feeble and slender. Nature, to use a German expression, had exhausted his fearful powers, and made him in disposition, when not tormented with the thirst of blood, a generous and noble beast. So physiological are thus also this creature's mind and character.

" The sloth, in appearance the most shapeless of beasts, may serve us for a third example. His head is small and round; his limbs too are round, thick, shapeless, and like stuffed cushions; his neck stiff, as if it were one piece with the head; the hair of it has a contrary direction to that of the back; the wretched head, in place, form and functions, being subordinate to the belly and posteriors, which appear the principal parts; for the organs of voracity far exceed those of sense; and even the heart and lungs are slightly formed. Hence his blood is so cold as to border on that of amphibia; his heart palpitates long after being taken out, and the legs are agitated after the heart is gone, as though he were in a slumber. Thus while he wants susceptible nerves, and even active muscular powers, he possesses a more diffused and exquisite irritability, like the polypus or earth-worm. This singular animal, therefore, may be less unfortunate than he seems. He loves warmth and the quiet of sleep; when he wants warmth he sleeps; and as if lying down were painful to him, he fastens himself to a bough with his paws, and feeds himself with one of them, while, hanging from it like a bag

he enjoys in the warm sun-beams his grub-like existence. Thus the mishapen form of his feet is a benefit to him. From the peculiarity of their structure, the tender animal cannot support himself on their balls, but only on the convexity of his claws; on which as on the wheels of a waggon, he shoves himself slowly and commodiously along. His six and forty ribs, the like of which no other quadruped possesses, form a long vault for his store-house of provisions, and are the ossified rings of a voracious leaf-bag of a grub."*

To the preceding may be added a few similar observations on the mole, a creature whose form and structure are admirably suited to its mode of life. "What more palpable argument of Providence than the mole?" says Cardan, cited by Dr. More, "Her body is so exactly fitted to her manner of life; for her dwelling being under ground where nothing is to be seen, nature has so obscurely provided her with an organ of sight, that naturalists have doubted whether she have any eyes at all or not; but for amends, she has very eminently conferred upon her what she is capable of for defence and warning of danger; for she is exceedingly quick of hearing. And then we see to what purpose are her short tail and short legs, but broad fore-feet armed with sharp claws; she so swiftly working herself under ground and making her way so fast in the earth, as they that

* See Herder's Philosophy of Man, Vol. 1. Book 3.

behold it cannot but admire it. Her legs are short, that she need dig no more than will serve the mere thickness of her body; and her fore feet are broad, that she may scoop away much earth at a time; and little or no tail she has, because she courses not on the ground, like the rat or mouse of whose kindred she is, but lives under the earth, and digs herself a dwelling there. And she making her way, through so thick an element, which will not yield easily, it had been dangerous to have drawn so long a train behind her; for her enemy might fall upon her rear, and fetch her out, before she had completed or got full possession of her works."

Boyle remarks pretty correctly, that although the mole is not totally blind, she has scarcely sight enough to distinguish particular objects. It is supposed that her eye is so constructed as to give her the idea of light and nothing else, and that this idea or sensation is probably painful to the animal. Hence when she comes into broad day she might be in danger of being taken, unless she were thus affected by a light striking upon her eye, and immediately warning her to bury herself in her proper element. More sight would be useless to her, as none at all might be fatal?*

There would be no end of physiological facts and reasonings, tending to prove the intelligence and design displayed in the formation and habits of the

* Spectator, Vol. 2. No. 120.

lower animals. All the writings upon natural theology, as it is called, abound in such observations; and there is scarcely a single animal, whose nature and habits are at all known, that might not afford an obvious illustration.

CHAP. III.

OF THE INSTINCTS IN MAN.

THE examples, which have been hitherto selected, afford some tolerable notion of the views and ground intended to be taken in the following reasonings. Whether we regard the form and internal structure of the lower animals, physiologically, or their acts and general economy, physically, we have the clearest evidence that their instinctive actions are regulated by the most perfect intelligence. And because means are so wonderfully adapted to their ends, we are compelled to suppose that these actions are not entirely under their own direction; but, as all are perfect in their kinds, and all conspire, (every individual in its limited sphere) with astonishing, unerring precision, to one great end,—the support and continuance, and order of the outward creation,—we must conclude, that the whole are governed by a power infinite in wisdom, working in them by its energy, through the instrumentality of their respective organs.

And, again, we are necessitated to conclude, that however human sagacity may have succeeded, in a few obvious instances, in explaining the relation of the structure of any organ to its outward use, yet there is not an animal act in the creation which does not involve the supposition of an ultimate cause, mysterious and inexplicable.

Nay, we are warranted in determining, from analogy, if we look at the simple law of gravitation, as well as from the constitution and frame of the human mind, (which always bewilders itself in attempting to comprehend the abstract relation of physical cause and effect,) that the theory of these animal instinctive operations never can be clearly discovered to the natural human understanding.

But, before I proceed, it may be proper for me to prepare the ground-work a little better for further observation, by noticing in this place, a few of those simple instinctive operations which belong to Man himself;—operations, which, being of paramount importance to the individual welfare of the human creature, notwithstanding he is dignified by his rational powers, have not been entrusted to Reason, we may safely presume, because of its insufficiency to the several offices.

Hence, we cannot wonder that Man should be unable to comprehend in the Brute, what is going forward in his own system, as darkly and mysteriously, as respects his own conception or knowledge of the operation, (perhaps it may be said, as independently),

as if he had never been endowed with the inquisitive and penetrating faculty of Reason. He is as much at fault in explaining satisfactorily the operation of any one of his own organs, with the most skilful anatomist at his service, as he would be in tracing the classes and orders of his ideas laid up in the store-house of his mind, or in ascertaining how he recalls, associates, and compares these invisible elements of thought.

The most philosophical view of human Instincts which I have seen, is contained in Dr. Reid's Essays on the powers of the Mind. Dr. Gregory in his Comparative View, though he often alludes to them, has given us but little special information; neither distinguishing nor enumerating these original powers. Smellie has dismissed the subject with a very brief general notice.

All seem to agree that *Instinct* is a principle common to Man and the whole animal world;—that many things necessary for our preservation must be done by it,—that our Instincts are adapted to the weakness of our understandings,—and that the most remarkable appear in infancy, when we are ignorant of every thing, and therefore (in the language of Dr. Reid), "must perish if we had not an invisible Guide, who leads us blindfold in the way we should take, if we had eyes to see it."

It may be proper again to define Instinct to be "a natural blind impulse to certain actions, without

having any end in view, without deliberation, and very often without any conception of what we do."

Thus, the act of breathing is performed by the alternate contraction and relaxation of certain muscles, by which the chest is expanded in its dimensions or contracted, and consequently the capacity of the lungs increased or diminished; so as either to bring the blood nearly in contact with the atmospherical air, that it may undergo a chemical change essential to life, or, when freed from its carbonaceous principle, that it may be withdrawn into the general circulation.

"We cannot suppose," says Dr. Reid, "that the infant knows any thing about the chemical or the mechanical theory of this important vital function; yet he breathes as soon as he is born with perfect regularity, as if he had been taught, and had acquired the habit by long practice.

"By the same kind of instinct a new-born child sucks and swallows its food as perfectly as if it knew the principles of the operation, which is very complex. About thirty pair of muscles must be employed in every draught, yet not simultaneously, but succeeding each other in certain order. This regular train of operations is, however, carried on according to the nicest rules of art by the infant who has neither art nor science, nor experience nor habit. That it knows nothing of the means by which the sensation of hunger may be removed, is evident—for it will suck indis-

criminately every thing brought into contact with its mouth."

By a like principle, Dr. Reid supposes, that infants cry when they are pained or hurt; that they are afraid, when they are left alone; that they start when in danger of falling; that they are terrified by an angry countenance or angry tones of voice, and are soothed and comforted by a placid countenance and by soft and gentle tones of voice.

In the more perfect of the lower animals we see much the same instincts as in the human kind.

Dr. Reid again remarks, that "besides the instincts which appear only in infancy, and are intended to supply the want of understanding in that early period, there are many which continue through life and which supply the defects of our intellectual powers in every period." Of these he notices three classes.

"First—There are many things necessary to be done for our preservation, which even when we will to do, we know not the means by which they must be done. A man knows that he must swallow his food before it can nourish him. But he knows nothing of the names and nature and office of the various nerves and muscles which must co-operate to this action. If it were to be directed by his understanding and will, he would starve, before he learned how to perform it. These nerves and muscles are moved by some impulse, of which the cause is unknown, without any thought, will, or intention on his part—they

are moved instinctively. And this is the case, in some degree, in every voluntary motion of our body, as in stretching out the arm. We neither know, nor think any thing of nerve or muscle, when we stretch out the arm, yet they immediately produce the effect which we designed.

" A second case, in which we have need of Instinct, even in advanced life, is, where the action must be so frequently repeated that to intend and will it every time it is done would occupy too much of our thought, and leave no room for other necessary employments of the mind.

" We must breathe often every minute whether awake or asleep. We must often close the eye-lids, in order to preserve the lustre of the eye. Nature gives us an impulse to do them without any thought at all.

" A third case, in which we need the aid of Instinct, is when the action must be done so suddenly, that there is no time to think and determine. When a man loses his balance, either on foot or on horseback, he makes an instantaneous effort to recover it by instinct. The effort would be in vain, if it waited the determination of reason and will.

" When any thing threatens our eyes, we wink hard by instinct, and can scarcely avoid doing so, even when we know that the stroke is aimed in jest, and that we are safe from danger."

Dr. Reid concludes, that " thus the merciful author

of our nature hath adapted our instincts to the weakness of our understanding.

" In infancy we are ignorant of every thing; yet many things must be done for our preservation, and these are done by Instinct. When we grow up there are many motions of our limbs and bodies necessary, which can be performed only by a curious and complex machinery, of which the bulk of mankind are totally ignorant, and which the most skilful anatomist knows but imperfectly. All this machinery is set a going by Instinct.

" Some actions must be so often repeated through the whole of life, that if they required attention and will, we should be able to do nothing else. These are done by instinct. Our preservation from danger often requires such sudden exertions, that there is no time to think and to determine. Accordingly we make such exertions by instinct."

In addition to the preceding observations on human instinct, Dr. Reid has made some judicious remarks on the appetites which seem to apply to the present subject.

" The ends," says he, " for which our natural appetites are given, are too evident to escape the observation of any man of the least reflection. The reason of mankind would be altogether insufficient for these ends, without the direction and call of appetite. Though a man knew that his life must be supported by eating, reason could not direct him when to eat

or what; how much, or how often. In all these things appetite is a much better guide than reason. Were reason only to direct us in this matter, its calm voice would often be drowned in the hurry of business, or the charms of amusement. But the voice of appetite rises gradually, and at last becomes loud enough to call off our attention from any other employment. Without our appetites, even supposing mankind inspired with all the knowledge requisite for answering their ends, the race of men must have perished long ago; but by their means, whether man be savage or civilized, knowing or ignorant, virtuous or vicious, the race is continued from one generation to another.

"By the same means, the tribes of brute animals, from the whale that ranges the ocean to the least microscopic insect, have been continued from the beginning of the world to this day."*

I have thus enumerated a few of those actions in mankind which suggested themselves to Dr. Reid, as appertaining to the province of Instinct. It is true, they appear somewhat different from the examples that have been given of pure instinct in the brute; and it is possible, that many may question how far some of them belong to this class of animal operations. Some perhaps may refer them entirely to mechanical impulse. But whether the moving cause act in the first instance by mechanical impression; or whether the term *Instinct* deserves to be applied

* See Reid's Essays, vol. 3. Essay 3. Chap. 1.

to them or not; they certainly do not come within the province of Reason; for they are common to some of the lowest of the brute animals with man; and so far, the conclusion, that they are independent of conscious intention or deliberation, must remain unshaken.

Admitting with Dr. Priestley, that none of these actions are instinctive, and that they are wholly to be explained on mechanical principles, it is easy to see that we must come at last to precisely the same conclusion respecting a divine Intelligence, whether we suppose that it acts in the first instance on *mechanical* or on *vital* powers. But, one would think, it was now sufficiently settled, that none of the acts of any living organised being can be explained on purely mechanical principles, without some inherent vital energy, communicated by the Creator. Therefore the acts of *breathing* and *sucking*, though they may implicate some degree of mechanical agency, are in their nature eminently vital, and have no more to do with outward instruction than the germination of a seed has to do with it. Consequently they arise from an instinctive physical impulse directed by Supreme Wisdom.

It appears, therefore, that we have no need to look to the lower animals in order to feel the conviction that many operations, marking singular intelligence, are going forward in the animal economy, which are not under the direction of Reason, and which we are unable to comprehend. Neither are we under the

necessity of being confined to doubtful instances in the human system: for, to rely on these would only weaken our argument, if they were the best or only ones we could adduce. But it is certain that the most important functions of the human body, as digestion, assimilation, nutrition, absorption, secretion, circulation, respiration, and many others, are performed by instinctive living actions, with the operation of which our reason or volition has no immediate concern. Science has pointed out to us, obscurely, the mechanism or fabric of the organs on which some of these functions depend. I say, *obscurely*, for every fresh insight we get by the microscope or by injection, only shews a new series of wonders in their structure. But about the mode of their working we are as ignorant, as if we knew nothing at all of the mechanism.

In truth, the only material difference that seems to exist between these instinctive actions and others in principle, is this, that they are internal and almost invisible, except by their effects; whereas the others properly called Instincts, display themselves openly to our view.

The caterpillar, when shaken off the leaves of a tree, that returns and crawls up the trunk and along the branches till it regains the situation best fitted for its present support and future transformation, does not exhibit a phenomenon differing much in principle from the stomach that digests, or the gland that secretes, or the lacteal that absorbs. The chief

difference is, that the latter are parts of a system, and the insect to which I have alluded constitutes a whole or entire self-moving structure. But the perfection with which the several organs of the body discharge their functions, when in a state of health, is as worthy of admiration as any phenomenon without us among the insect tribes. And we may presume, as they are none of them the works of man, that the evidence of wisdom should equally appear in one class of phenomena as in another—consequently, the perfection and efficiency of the acts as well as of the divine workmanship.

When a bone is broken, the surgeon does not in fact produce a union between the fractured ends. That process is effected by a power of self-restoration in the human body, to which his skill cannot reach; and because he can go no farther, he calls it a law of the animal economy. He may, indeed, aid and assist, or he may thwart: so much power has been given to man, to good or to evil, over the body as well as the mind: but the ultimate efforts are not his own, nor can he wholly command their obedience.

Hence has arisen the term *vis medicatrix naturæ*, or healing power of nature, to designate a power implanted in the bodily constitution to preside over all its functions, vital and natural, for its support in health, and its preservation from injury,—a principle, powerfully active in effect, whether the term be admitted or rejected, and under all its appellations

meaning the same thing, though the cause be unknown. Therefore, whether it be called the φύσις of Hippocrates, the *archæus* of Van Helmont, the *anima* of Stahl, or the *vis medicatrix* of Cullen; whether it be dignified as the vital principle or degraded to mere mechanical and organic impulse; it is used to imply a mysterious innate faculty or power, from the moment of birth,—even from the first rudiments of living action,—ever watching and sustaining the body in its struggles with the various accidents of time to the last hour of human existence, when by an irreversible decree its efforts must cease.

CHAP. IV.

OF CERTAIN ACTIONS IN THE LOWER ANIMALS, IN SOME DEGREE DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE OPERATIONS OF INSTINCT.

SECT. I.

On the effects of Human Intercourse on the lower Animals.

HAVING given a few examples of Instinct, or of a power operating above the conscious intelligence of the creature, I shall for the present digress from my immediate subject to notice certain actions of the lower animals; some of which seem to be referable to human instruction, some to a conscious intelligence or modified rationality in the creature, some to natural acuteness of the organs of sense, and some to the operation of a sense or faculty which appears to be altogether inexplicable.

It is pretty obvious that Instinct acts more immediately and determinately in the lower animals, like the appetites in man, for the preservation of the

individual and the multiplication of the species. The lower animals have also their appetites; but these are wisely placed under the government of Instinct, while the appetites of man require the controul of his higher principles.

The means which the brutes have of procuring food, of defending themselves from danger, and of providing for their offspring, are conducted with admirable skill and economy. This is an institution of nature under her own especial care. But beyond these objects we find them capable of many acts and services, which in various ways we turn to our own advantage.

We may perhaps adopt the general conclusion that Instinct governs the Brutes, and still admit the exception that some of their actions are not comprehended in this rule; as we may lay down the general position that man is a rational being, though we know that the conduct of many is often highly irrational; and, besides, many actions of the human frame are subject to the laws of instinct. But to draw the universal conclusion that man is under the exclusive dominion of Reason, and the brute under that of Instinct, would perhaps be assuming more than is consistent with sound philosophy.

It is, therefore, of importance to ascertain under what peculiar circumstances the lower animals exhibit phenomena of the doubtful character alluded to; so that some of the wisest men should say, the barrier between Instinct and Reason is too nice to be

apprehended; and, as Pope expresses it, "that these principles are for ever separate, yet for ever near."

It appears, then, as far as we can range in the field of nature to survey the instincts of animals, that the farther they are removed from the confines of human intercourse, the more perfect are their instincts. And, on the contrary, the more their natural habits are changed by the artificial modes of life common in human Society, they lay aside pure instinct, and the more do the actions, at least of the more perfect animals, approach to the rule or line of rationality. Indeed, we see something of this kind to happen in our own species; for if instinct, as it is commonly understood, have any thing to do with the perfection of the senses, we know that in the rude or natural state of human society, they go far to excel those of the brute; and even the sight and hearing and smell are so wonderfully acute, as, in many important points relating to their personal advantages, to convey clearer information to the unenlightened Indian than the philosopher could attain by all his scientific experience. Hence, it would appear, that, as mankind is compressed in society, their instincts like those of the brute, give place to the culture of Reason: while, as man takes his range in the wilds of uncultivated nature, and seeks no other guide for his direction, his senses acquire a perfection which sometimes far exceeds the laboured deductions of reason. Dr. Gregory had a view somewhat similar to this, which he has expressed in the following passage: "Some

of the advantages, says he, which the brute animals have over us are possessed in a considerable degree by those of our own species, who, being but just above them, and guided in a manner entirely by instinct, are equally strangers to the noble attainments of which their natures are capable, and to the many miseries attendant on their more enlightened brethren of mankind."

"Is it not notorious," he adds, "that all animals, except ourselves, enjoy every pleasure their natures are capable of, that they are strangers to pain and sickness, and, abstracting from external accidents, arrive at the natural period of their being? We speak of wild animals only. Those that are tame and under our direction, partake of all our miseries." "Is it a necessary consequence of our superior faculties, that not one of 10,000 of our species dies a natural death, that we struggle through a frail and feverish being, in continual danger of sickness, of pain, of dotage, and the thousand nameless ills that experience shows to be the portion of human life?"*

Dr. Gregory intimates that this is not the designed order of nature; and that these evils are adventitious and unnatural to our constitution.

"There is a remarkable uniformity," continues Dr. Gregory, "in the works of animals. But the only exception to this uniformity of character in the different species of animals seems to be among those who are most connected with mankind, particularly

* See Comparative View.

dogs and horses: animals under our direction partake of all our miseries." So then, by bringing the lower animals under the direction of our reason, we abridge their enjoyments while we degrade their instincts.

Now I apprehend, this effect in the lower animals can only arise from a departure from the original institutions of nature, in consequence of their connection with the artificial usages of human society. But if brutes by this connection partake of some of our miseries, it is reasonable to think they should be compensated by partaking of some of our advantages: and if they lose their natural instincts, what compensation can we afford them except by imparting a portion of our Reason?

Accordingly, this view of the case has been taken by others, and it has, I think, been satisfactorily shewn, that Brutes, in the extreme of utter estrangement from man, when they are unprotected by human power and intelligence, require the play of all their instincts to provide for their wants and to avoid or subdue their enemies. But when they are admitted to intimate familiarity with man, and receiving kindness and a sort of culture at his hands, they seem to be enlightened with a ray of human reason, and warmed with a degree of human affection. But, it is in that intermediate state, when the animal has lost the wild freedom of the forest, and is become the slave of man, without acquiring the privilege of being his friend and companion, that instinct languishes without being

replaced by the borrowed beam from human intelligence.* Now, it is easy to perceive, that something of the same kind may be traced in our own species, so wonderfully does the analogy run between man and the brute, in this case as in many others. For we observe a similar effect to that above stated on comparing the lofty independence of the native Indian, exulting in a life of freedom, and enjoying his natural powers in full perfection, with the opposite extreme, in which a high state of civilization and of civil liberty call forth the exercise of the rational powers in the improvement of art and science: while in that intermediate state,—the deplorable condition of slavery and oppression, under which so many thousands of our fellow creatures groan,—a listless torpor is manifest, which affords neither exercise to the natural senses or instincts, nor scope for the developement of reason. And it cannot but be interesting to notice, how mankind and the brutes, respectively, afford striking examples, according to the situations in which they are accidentally thrown, either of the rude and hardy instructions of nature on the one hand, or of the higher but enfeebling cultivation of art on the other; participating as it were in the advantages and disadvantages of each state, as if to a certain extent they were compounded of the same elements. But we need not be alarmed at this partial resemblance, while we consider that in one important

* See a similar remark in "Instinct Displayed," by P. Wakefield, Letter 34.

light they will bear no comparison. For, so long as man is conscious of his Maker, and the brute unconscious, so long in point of abstract relation to the eternal source of Wisdom and Goodness, must the most intelligent brute be placed on equality with the plant or stone. And when we trace the relations of man in some striking analogies with the lower animals, we only trace his affinity to the earth out of which he was formed, in earthly affections and desires. But when we contemplate his mind, soaring into infinity, seeking to comprehend what is at present incomprehensible, taking a glimpse into the world of spirits, and looking forward into futurity with a curiosity unceasing and unsatisfied, we trace at once his relation to another state of being, and discover that he is animated by a spark of divine intelligence.

To return to the train of reasoning, we may observe the degradation of the natural instincts to which I have alluded, in kine, sheep, goats, fowls, &c. when domesticated. In horses and dogs, too, these original instincts are much diminished; but in the latter, a compensation, as I before remarked, is provided in the borrowed light of reason. It is not to feed upon them, but to make their strength, their diligence, their sagacity and attachment subservient to our own wants, that we tame and teach these faithful animals. But this is not the case with the other class, which we merely protect and fatten without expecting from them any services like those of the dog or horse; services that require a recollection of the past, antici-

pation of the future, and the exercise of those powers which do not, like instinct, operate uniformly, and therefore are allied to human reason, or as an able writer expresses it, "are a kind of borrowed light from the rational powers of the thinking and governing nature."

In a wild state, kine for instance, possess an acuteness, both of sight and smell, and a spirit and fierceness in defending their young, which disappear when, by domestication, we have reduced them to a condition in which the former of these qualities would be of no value, and the latter dangerous to themselves and others. In their wild state, they distinguish by the smell, the grass where the footsteps of man are to be traced, with symptoms of peculiar agitation, as of rage and horror.

The beaver in his native state is superior to most other animals in forethought and something like intelligence. He is politic, vigilant, and social, labouring incessantly for the public good. He is not only most industrious, but most versatile in the modes of his industry. He is neither discouraged by difficulties, nor exhausted by toil. He sees the labour of years swept away by the floods, and instantly begins, with renewed activity, to repeat the same labours.

But in a state of captivity what a change! No creature can then appear more awkward and less adapted to serve or please. His fine instinct is degraded or perverted. The only distinction it shows its master, is not biting him. From its habits of

ceaseless industry, it works, except in the depth of winter, the whole night long. For when wild, it collects food in the day; and cuts and drags wood in the night; but, when tamed, which can only be done by taking it when very young, it is necessary on account of its restlessness to leave it out in the yard. There it employs itself the whole night, in carrying fire-wood from the pile, and blocking up the door with it: so that when the family rise in the morning, they find themselves barricadoed with a quantity of wood, that takes no small time to remove.*

But although the beaver is so useless in a state of captivity, yet we know not if the necessities of man required his education, to what important purposes his industry might be made subservient. It is clear, however, that he loses, or omits to exercise, his original instincts, because they are not needed; and he is not trained to useful habits, because man does not know how to employ them to advantage. If, however we take an individual of our own species, who may have advanced to superior skill in any art, from the field of his labour, and place him in a new situation where he cannot exercise it, how ignorant do we often find him, and how awkward in the concerns of life! This is the case even in men whose minds are well imbued with speculative knowledge; that they are as ignorant of many things obvious to the unlettered, as if they had had no experience of the

* See the letter above quoted, from which some of the preceding observations are taken.

world: so that, proficiency in one department does not render a person equally qualified to succeed in another; and the necessities of brutes oblige them, more than those of man, to concentrate their powers on a particular object.

We have spoken of the degradation of kine when domesticated; but we find that a surprising sagacity is developed by education in some countries, highly useful to their possessors. Thus, the bunched oxen of the Hottentots, not only submit to all kinds of domestic labour, but they become favourite domestics, and companions in amusements; and they participate in the habitation and table of their masters. As their nature is improved by the gentleness of their education, and the kind treatment they receive, they acquire sensibility and intelligence, and perform actions which we would not expect from them. The Hottentots train their oxen to war. In all their armies there are considerable troops of these oxen, which are easily governed, and are let loose by the chief when a proper opportunity occurs. They instantly dart with impetuosity upon the enemy. They strike with their horns, kick, overturn and trample under their feet every thing that opposes their fury. They run ferociously into the ranks, which they soon put into disorder, and thus pave the way for an easy victory to their masters.

They are also instructed to guard the flocks; which they conduct with dexterity, and defend them from the attacks of strangers and of rapacious animals.

They are taught to understand signals; and when pasturing, at the smallest signal from the keeper, they bring back and collect the wandering animals. They attack all strangers with fury; so that they prove a great security against robbers. They know every inhabitant of the kraal or village, and these they suffer to approach the cattle with the greatest safety.*

With respect to sheep, Buffon, I think, rashly maintains, that the race must have been long ago extinct, if man had not taken them under his protection. But sheep are endowed with a strong associating principle, and when threatened with an attack, they form a line of battle, and boldly face the enemy. In a natural state, the rams constitute one half of the flock. They join together and form the front. When thus prepared for repelling an assault, no lion or tiger can resist their united impetuosity and force.†

Upon the whole, it seems to be established as a principle, that, where there is no room for the exercise of pure Instinct, either by man's interposition or otherwise, it will languish, like all the natural senses, or even the higher faculties of the mind.

* Smellie, ii. 324. † Ibid, ii. 284.

Sect. II.

On the Perfection of the Natural Senses as distinguishable from Instinct.

In closely examining the subject, in order to ascertain to what principle certain actions of the brutes belong, there seems a propriety at least in our present state of knowledge in distinguishing between instinct and the natural senses. And it must be admitted that there is a perfection of these senses which brutes often retain when in closest familiarity with man. We cannot clearly perceive that the operation of instinct depends on an acute smell or a sharp sight, or on any of the natural senses carried to perfection. For how these should wholly direct the beaver or the bee, is beyond our comprehension. It appears therefore that the perfection of the five outward senses is neither to be accounted an evidence of pure instinct on the one hand, nor of extraordinary sagacity and reason on the other. For it is obvious that a camel may scent water at the distance of half a league in the desert, or a blood-hound may trace his master among hundreds of people in a fair, from the sense of smelling alone; as the vulture's eye may perceive a carcase from heights in the air beyond the power of human vision to reach; yet pure instinct or that mysterious power which operates blindly and uniformly, as in the bee, may have no part in these perceptions. While on the other hand, the instances

of fidelity in the dog, and intelligence in the elephant, are as little to be considered depending on the perfection of the natural senses.

Boyle gives us a remarkable account of acute smell in a dog. "A person of quality, to whom I am near allied, assured me, that to try whether a young blood-hound was well made, he caused one of his servants, who had not killed or touched any of his deer, to walk to a country town, four miles off, and then to a market town three miles distant from that; which done, this nobleman, a competent while after, put the blood-hound upon the scent of the man, and caused him to be followed by a servant or two; the master himself going after to know the event; which was, that the dog, without ever seeing the man he was to pursue, followed him by the scent to the above mentioned places, notwithstanding the multitude of market people who went along in the same way, and of travellers who had occasion to cross it: and when the blood-hound came to the chief market town, he passed through the streets without taking notice of any of the people there, and left not till he had gone to the house where the man he sought for rested himself, and found him in an upper room."*

"A gentleman of my acquaintance, who has often occasion to employ blood-hounds, assures me, that if a man have but passed over a field, the scent will lie so as to be perceptible to a good dog of that sort for several hours after. An old ingenious hunter informs

* Boyle's works, Effluvia.

me, he has observed that the scent of a flying and heated deer will sometimes continue on the ground from one day to the next."*

We might collect a great variety of instances of the exquisite perfection of the senses in the lower animals; and we know that man in his state of nature possesses them in an extraordinary degree; the Indian being able by his sight alone to trace footsteps in the woods, on the leaves upon the ground, which could not be discovered by others. Blind men acquire so keen a sense of touch, that the tip of the finger is almost like an eye in discovering the qualities of near objects; and they can distinguish colours merely by a nice discrimination of that peculiar state of the surface of bodies to which each colour belongs. Boyle mentions that he knew a physician, who, in a fever, had his sense of hearing so nice and tender that he very plainly heard soft whispers, made at a considerable distance, which were not in the least perceived by the healthy by-standers; but when the fever left him, he heard as other men. And a medical friend of mine stated that he knew an instance of a gentleman whose sense of smell was so painfully acute, as to occasion him serious inconvenience. He could even distinguish his friends in a room, and different individuals, by the sense of smell alone.

An interesting illustration of the acuteness of sense is given by Dugald Stewart, concerning James Mitchell, a boy, born both blind and deaf, who hav-

* Boyle's works, Effluvia.

ing no other senses by which to keep up a connection with an external world than those of smell, touch, and taste, chiefly depended for information on the first, employing it on all occasions, like a domestic dog, in distinguishing persons and things. By this sense he identified his friends and relations, and conceived a sudden attachment or dislike to strangers according to the nature of the effluvium that escaped from their skin. He appeared to know his friends by smelling them very slightly, and he at once detected strangers. It was difficult, however, to ascertain at what distance he could distinguish people by this sense; but he appeared to be able to do so at a considerable distance from the object. This was particularly striking when a person entered the room, as he seemed to be aware of this before he could derive information from any sense than that of smell. When a stranger approached him, he eagerly began to touch some part of the body, commonly taking hold of his arm, which he held near his nose, and after two or three strong inspirations through the nostrils, he appeared to form a decided opinion concerning him. If it were favourable, he shewed a disposition to become more intimate, examined more minutely his dress, and expressed by his countenance more or less satisfaction. But if it happened to be unfavourable, he suddenly went off to a distance with expressions of carelessness or disgust.*

Collins relates "that the quickness of the New Hol-

* Good's Study of Medicine, vol. iii. p. 257.

landers' eye and ear is equally singular: they can hear and distinguish objects which would totally escape an European. This circumstance renders them very acceptable guides to our sportsmen in the woods, as they never fail to point out the game before any European can discover it."

Another author says of a New Zealander, who accompanied him to England, "It was worthy of remark how much his sight and hearing were superior to other persons on board the ship; the sound of a distant gun was distinctly heard, or a strange sail readily discernible, by Moyhanger, when no other man on board could hear or perceive them."

The Hottentots "by the quickness of their eye, will discover deer and other sorts of game when very far distant; and they are equally expert in watching a bee to its nest. They no sooner hear the humming of the insect, than they squat themselves on the ground, and, having caught it with the eye, follow it to an incredible distance."

Barrow relates the following anecdote of one whom he had left behind ill on a journey: "He had fallen asleep about the middle of the preceding day, and had not awakened till night. Though very dark and unacquainted with a single step of our route, he had found us by following the track of the waggon. At this sort of business a Hottentot is uncommonly clever. There is not an animal among the numbers that range the wilds of Africa, if he be at all acquainted with it, the print of whose foot he cannot distinguish. The

print of any of his companions feet he would single out among a thousand."

Dr. Somerville confirms this statement, and refers the superiority of the Hottentots in these points to constant exercise of the organs.

In his frequent intercourse with the Nomadic tribes of Asia, Pallas had the best opportunities of observing their capabilities. "The Calmucks," he says, "have a fine nose, a good ear, and an extremely acute eye. On their journeys and military exeditions they often smell out a fire or a camp, and thus procure quarters for the night, or obtain booty. Many of them can distinguish by smelling at the hole of a fox or other animal, whether the creature be there or not. By lying flat, and putting their ear to the ground, they can catch at a great distance the noise of horses, of a flock, or of a single strayed animal. But nothing is so surprising as the perfection of their eyes, and the extraordinary distance at which they often perceive, from inconsiderable heights, small objects, such as the rising dust caused by cattle or horsemen; more particularly as the undulation of the boundless steppes, or plains, and the vapours which rise from and float upon them in warm weather, render things very obscure. In the expedition which the Torgot Vicechan Uaschi led against the Kubanians, the Calmuck force would certainly have missed the enemy, if a common Calmuck had not perceived, at the estimated distance of thirty versts, the smoke and dust of the hostile army, and pointed it out to other equally experienced

eyes, when the commander, Colonel Kischinskoi, could discern nothing with a good glass. They pursue lost or stolen cattle, or game, by the track for miles over deserts. Kirgises, or even Russians, in the wild parts of the empire, are equally able to follow and discriminate tracks by the eye. This, indeed, is not difficult on soft ground, or over snows; but it requires great practice and skill to choose the right out of several intermingled traces, to follow it over loose sand or snow, not to loose it in marshes or deep grass, but rather to judge from the direction of the grass, or from the depth of the print in snow or sand, how long it has been made."*

In civilized as well as savage life, a considerable degree of acuteness in some of the natural senses is often acquired by use. Mariners, it is well known, acquire a wonderful power of vision, by directing the eye habitually to distant objects on the horizon, while as Dr. Smith remarks, "men of letters who live much in their closets, and have seldom occasion to look at very distant objects, are seldom far-sighted." "It is often astonishing to a landsman to observe with what precision a sailor can distinguish in the offing, not only the appearance of a ship, which is altogether invisible to a landsman, but the number of her masts, the direction of her course, and the rate of her sailing. If she is a ship of his acquaintance, he frequently can tell her name before the landsman has

* See Lawrence's Lectures on Zoology, &c. chap. vi. where the above passages from the works of Collins, Barrow, and Pallas are cited.

been able to discover even the appearance of a ship."*

It will, I think, hardly be contended that the preceding examples of acuteness in the natural senses, whether in man or in the brute, belong to Instinct as it is above explained. Boyle, I observe, makes a clear distinction between Instinct and what he calls "a tenderness or quickness of sense." And from all that has been said, I think there is ground for such a distinction.

Sect. III.

On some singular acts of the lower Animals, particularly their migrations from one place to another.

It is well known that different tribes of animals are endowed with a sense or faculty which enables them to steer their course with astonishing precision from one place to another, through trackless regions of the air, and even of the ocean, and through strange and unknown countries. For it is a sense common to birds and fishes as well as to beasts.

We have numerous anecdotes of dogs and cats, which, after being conveyed to distant places, have found their way home, and often by a different route, or through a country they had never traversed before.

* Dr. Adam Smith on the External Senses.

The carrier pigeon affords a striking example of the facility and speed with which this bird pursues its flight from one place to another: but some might explain the fact by referring it to a degree of instruction, and by supposing that its extensive view would aid the bird in fixing on objects by which its course might be directed.

But that an ass, a serpent, and a sheep,—animals one would suppose to be naturally dull and stupid, in regard to their power of outward observation,—should each be able to transport itself through a strange country to a considerable distance, and to reach some known spot, with scarcely any delay, is hardly to be accounted for on any natural principles.

Dr. Good entertains a question whether there be any other than the five senses common to man and the higher classes of animals; and remarks, "that we occasionally meet with peculiarities of sensation that can hardly be resolved into any of them. Thus, the bat appears to be sensible of the presence of external objects and obstructions that are neither seen, smelt, heard, touched, nor tasted: for it will cautiously avoid them, when *all the senses* are purposely closed up. And hence many naturalists have ascribed a sixth sense to this animal. It is equally difficult," he adds, "by any of the known senses of fishes or birds, to account for the accuracy with which their migratory tribes are capable of steering their annual course through the depths of the ocean or the trackless regions of the atmosphere,

so as to arrive at a given season on a given coast or a given climate, with the precision of the expertest mariner."

Bees return home to their own hive after an excursion of some miles, though, from the convexity of their eye, it is supposed that they cannot see more than a yard distant.

Dr. Beattie mentions that he knew an instance of a dog which had been carried in a basket thirty miles through a country he never saw, finding his way, a week after, to his former dwelling. I have heard of a dog which had been conveyed from London to Scotland by sea, making his way by land the whole distance back again to London: and a still more remarkable case was related to me of a dog that had been transported across the Atlantic—not liking his new abode—actually taking a passage in another vessel, and again finding his master in England.*

Although sheep are considered so stupid in their domesticated state, yet, we are told, that a sheep which was driven from Scotland into Yorkshire, made its escape, and after passing through towns, crossing rivers, &c. revisited its native spot in the hills of Annandale. And another from Perthshire came back

* The following anecdote is taken from the *Times* newspaper:—"A terrier dog, belonging to Mr. Watkins, was taken on Friday to London by his servant, in a close covered cart, and was left tied up in a yard near Grosvenor-square that evening; in the night it broke from its confinement and came home through London, and was at its master's door in Arundel the next afternoon, a distance of near 60 miles.—Jan. 10, 1823."

to a farm twenty miles from Edinburgh. When it reached Stirling, it was fair day: the animal would not venture through the town among the populace, but rested itself at the north side till the fair dispersed, and came through late in the evening.

In "Instinct Displayed" we have several interesting anecdotes to this point, which appear to be well authenticated.

A sparrow which had been conveyed to London from Fulham in a covered cage, found its way back again, after some time, having flown out of the window, looking towards Northumberland Gardens, in quite a contrary direction.

Pennant tells us, that after the Earl of Southampton, the friend of Essex, in his fatal insurrection, had been confined a short time in the Tower, he was agreeably surprised by a visit from his favourite cat; which, according to tradition, having found her way thither, descended the chimney of his apartment, and seated herself by her master.

A cat was taken to the West Indies, and when it returned to the port of London, made its escape from the vessel, through the intricacies and windings of the metropolis to its former residence at Brompton. And another was taken from a place near Saffron Walden to Hampshire, from which it returned to its former mistress, as was supposed through London.*

Cats which had been transported in bags and baskets, have returned in this way from considerable

* See Letter xxv.

distances. By what sense, or faculty, this is effected, we are quite ignorant: and yet there is nothing in the act which assumes the character of Instinct.

With respect to mankind, we sometimes meet with persons who are so peculiarly affected by the presence of a particular object that is neither seen, smelt, tasted, heard, nor touched, as not only to be conscious of its presence, but to be in great distress till it is removed. The presence of a cat not unfrequently produces such an effect; and Dr. Good remarks that he has himself been "a witness of the most decisive proofs of this in several instances, and thinks it possible that the peculiar sense, may, in such cases, result from a preternatural modification in some of the branches of the olfactory nerve, which may render them capable of being stimulated in a new and peculiar manner: but the individuals thus affected are no more conscious of an excitement in this organ of sense than in any other; and from the anomaly and rare occurrence of the sensation itself, find no terms by which to express it."*

Boyle tells us that a lady assured him, she could very readily discover, whether a person who visited her in winter came from a place where there was any considerable quantity of snow: and this not by feeling any unusual cold, but from some peculiar impression, which, she thought, she received by the organ of smelling.†

* Good's Study of Medicine, vol. 3. ch. 4.

† Boyle's works, vol. 1. p. 429.

In Germany it has of late been attempted to be shown that every man is possessed of a sixth sense, though of a very different kind from those just referred to; for it is a sense not only common to every one, but to the system at large; and consists in that peculiar kind of internal but corporeal feeling respecting the general state of one's health, that induces us to exult in being as light as a feather, as elastic as a spring; or to sink under a sense of lassitude, fatigue, and weariness, which cannot be accounted for, and is unconnected with muscular labour or disease. (Good's Study of Medicine.)

But, as far as I am capable of judging, there are no good grounds for this hypothesis.

The following is one of the most extraordinary instances I have met with of this faculty of finding home, and is communicated on the authority of Lieutenant Alderman, Royal Engineers, who was acquainted with the fact.*

In March, 1816, an ass, the property of Captain Dundas, R.N., then at Malta, was shipped on board the Ister frigate, Captain Forrest, bound from Gibraltar for that island. The vessel having struck on some sands off the Point de Gat, at some distance from the shore, the ass was thrown overboard to give it a chance of swimming to land,—a poor one, for the sea was running so high, that a boat which left the ship was lost. A few days afterwards, however,

* See Introduction to Entomology, by Kirby and Spence, vol. 2, 502.

when the gates of Gibraltar were opened in the morning, the ass presented himself for admittance, and proceeded to the stable of Mr. Weeks, a merchant, which he had formerly occupied, to the no small surprise of this gentleman, who imagined that from some accident, the animal had never been shipped on board the Ister. On the return of this vessel to repair, the mystery was explained; and it turned out, that Valiante, as the ass was called, had not only swam safely to shore, but, without guide, compass, or travelling map, had found his way from Point de Gat to Gibraltar,—a distance of more than 200 miles, through a mountainous and intricate country, intersected by streams, which he had never traversed before; and in so short a period, that he could not have made one false turn. His not having been stopped on the road, was attributed to the circumstance of his having been formerly used to whip criminals upon, which was indicated to the peasants, who have a superstitious horror of such asses, by the holes in his ears, to which the persons flogged were tied."

Lord Monboddo relates the following singular anecdote of a serpent. "I am well informed of a tame serpent in the East Indies, which belonged to the late Dr. Vigot, and was kept by him in the suburbs of Madras. This serpent was taken by the French, when they invested Madras, in the late war, and was carried to Pondicherry in a close carriage. But from thence, he found his way back again to his

old quarters, which it seems he liked better, though Madras be distant from Pondicherry above 100 miles. This information, he adds, I have from a lady, who then was in India, and had seen the serpent often before his journey, and saw him after he returned."*

In considering the very singular acts above noticed, which are observed in so many different species of the lower animals, it would seem that they arise from some natural sense of which we are wholly ignorant, and perhaps can form no more reasonable conception than of the cause of magnetical attraction. For as the acts themselves do not appear to be of essential importance in the economy of nature, like those which embrace the care of young and the supply of food, (unless the periodical migrations of some animals be an exception to this remark,) it is most probable that, however mysterious, the acts in question are not from immediate supernatural agency, but from the determination of some hidden physical influence.

Sect. IV.

On the power of Reasoning, or drawing inferences in Animals.

If we come to consider the instances of attachment, cunning, fidelity, sagacity, gratitude, &c. in many of the lower animals, as well as the difference between

* See Ancient Metaph. vol. 2. book iv. chap. 6.

old and young in point of experience and usefulness, we cannot refer them to Instinct as above explained. For we find them so numerous and well authenticated, and these individual actions so diversified and adapted to times and circumstances, that if man is beholden to Reason for this power of adaptation, we must also admit that the brutes are likewise possessed of a degree of rationality. For as far as we are enabled to judge of the uniformity of Instinct, and of the power of the natural senses, these instances of sagacity belong neither to one nor the other. Consequently they must belong to Reason, or that intermediate power which compares and combines, adapting means to ends, and varying these means according to emergencies. For, supposing the higher orders of brutes are conscious of the acts, they can be classed with no other operations of mind, with which we are acquainted.

Yet it would appear, that all the acts of apparent reasoning in the lower animals have reference to some immediate object of perception, or depend on the faculty of memory. As they seem to be nearly incapable of forming any abstract notions or speculations apart from sensible objects; and the want of articulate language must ever oppose an insurmountable barrier to their progress in acquired knowledge, beyond the merest individual experience.

Of simple acts of comparison between a few ideas, we have numberless examples in the brute creation, as well as of their using means to attain their ends.

To begin with a few plain illustrations: An old monkey was shown in Exeter Change, who having lost his teeth, when nuts were given to him, took a stone and cracked them one by one; thus using tools to effect his purpose.

A friend of Dr. Darwin saw on the north coast of Ireland above a hundred crows preying upon muscles, which is not their natural food; each crow took a muscle up into the air twenty or forty yards high, and let it fall on the stones, and thus by breaking the shell got possession of the animal. Ravens, we are told, often resort to the same contrivance. And a lady of the Doctor's acquaintance saw a little bird repeatedly hop upon a poppy stem, and shake the head with its bill, till many seeds were scattered, when it settled on the ground, and picked up the seeds.

Lord Bacon tells us of a raven, "which in a drought, threw pebbles into an hollow tree where she espied water, that the water might rise so as she might come to it."*

Linnæus informs us that the martin dwells on the outside of houses in Europe under the eaves; and that when it has built its nest the sparrow frequently takes possession of it. The martin unable to dislodge his intruding enemy, convokes his companions, some of whom guard the captive, whilst others bring clay, completely close up the entrance of the nest, then fly away, leaving the sparrow to be suffocated."

* See Advancement of Learning, book ii.

It is known that the foot of the goat is peculiarly formed for climbing precipices; and the animal is fond of ascending rocky heights.

Two goats, grazing about the ramparts of Plymouth citadel, got down upon the narrow ledge of the rock, and one of them advancing before the other, till it came to an angle, was enabled to return; but in its way back, met its companion, which produced a most perplexing dilemma, as it was impossible for them to get past each other. Many persons saw them without being able to lend any assistance. After a considerable time one of the goats was observed to kneel down with great caution, and crouch as close as it could lie; which was no sooner done, than the other, with great dexterity, walked over him, and they both returned the way they came in perfect safety. And at Ardinglass, near Glenarm, in Ireland, two goats, moving towards each other, over a precipice 1000 feet high, on a narrow ledge of the rock, were seen to extricate themselves from danger by a similar expedient.*

In both these instances the animals looked at each other for some time, as if they were considering their situation, and deliberating what was best to be done in the emergency. I apprehend that mere Instinct would have prompted them immediately to act, instead of thus comparing and judging by their outward senses of danger and expedients.

* Instinct Displayed, pp. 66 & 97.

The author of the article 'Instinct' in the Encyclopœdia Britannica has related the following fact, on the testimony of a gentleman whose veracity was unquestioned, and who being totally unacquainted with the theories of Philosophers, had of course no favourite hypothesis to support.

"In the spring of 1791, a pair of crows made their nest on a tree, of which there are several planted round his garden; and in his morning walks he had often been amused by witnessing furious combats between them and a cat. One morning the battle raged more fiercely than usual, till at last the cat gave way, and took shelter under a hedge, as if to wait a more favourable opportunity of retreating to the house. The crows continued for a short time to make a threatening noise; but perceiving that on the ground they could do nothing more than threaten, one of them lifted a stone from the middle of the garden and perched with it on a tree planted in the hedge, where she sat watching the motions of the enemy of her young. As the cat crept along under the hedge, the crow accompanied her by flying from branch to branch and from tree to tree; and when at last puss ventured to quit her hiding place, the crow, leaving the trees and hovering over her in the air, let the stone drop from on high on her back." The author adds, "that the crow on this occasion reasoned, is self evident; and it seems to be little less evident, that the ideas employed in her reasoning were enlarged beyond those ideas which she had received

from her senses. By her senses she may have perceived that the shell of a fish is broken by a fall, but could her senses inform her, that a cat would be wounded or driven off the field by the fall of a stone? No; from the effect of the one fall preserved in her memory, she must have inferred the other, by her power of reasoning."

We have many instances of kind and affectionate attachment in the brute animals to each other, not only of the same but of different species. Even dogs and cats, in the same house, have exhibited this attachment, as well as cats and birds.

A curious anecdote of the raven is related in the Gentleman's Magazine. He lived many years ago at the Red Lion Inn, Hungerford, and was called Rafe. It is given in the words of a gentleman who lodged at the inn.

"Coming into the inn yard," says he, "my chaise ran over and bruised the leg of my Newfoundland dog; and while we were examining the injury, Rafe was evidently a concerned spectator; for, the minute the dog was tied up under the manger with my horse, Rafe not only visited him but brought him bones and attended on him with particular and repeated marks of kindness. I observed it to the hostler, who told me that the bird had been brought up with a dog, and that the affection between them was mutual, and all the neighbourhood had been witnesses of their many reciprocal acts of kindness. Rafe's poor dog after a while broke his leg, and during the long time

he was confined, Rafe waited on him constantly, carried him his provisions, and never scarce left him alone. One night, by accident, the stable door had been shut, and Rafe had been deprived of the company of his friend the whole night; but the hostler found in the morning the door so pecked away, that had it not been opened, in another hour Rafe would have made his own entrance. My landlady confirmed this account, and mentioned several other acts of kindness shewn by this bird to all dogs in general, but particularly to maimed or wounded ones."

In Rees's Cyclopædia, an instance is mentioned of singular sagacity in a cat. A lady had a tame bird, which she used to let out of its cage every day. One morning as it was picking up crumbs from the carpet, her cat, who always before shewed great kindness to the bird, seized it on a sudden, and jumped with it, in her mouth, upon a table. The lady, alarmed for the fate of her favourite, on turning about, observed that a strange cat had just come into the room. After turning it out, her own cat came down from her place of safety, and dropped the bird, without inflicting the least injury."

Now, it seems very clear, on considering this act, that various circumstances must have influenced this sagacious animal. She must have known that the bird was in danger from this intruder, and must have reflected on the best means of rescue; and we may take it for granted that Instinct could not, on the same principle, have prompted the one cat to destroy,

and the other cat to save, at the same moment of time. But the manner in which the preservation was effected is instructive, and affords a very striking example of reasoning in the brute, the more striking, as cats are not remarkable for sagacity.

In 'Instinct Displayed,' an anecdote is related of a cat, which, by giving timely warning in the best way she could, to the parent of a child in extreme danger, was the means of saving it from drowning.*

Instances of gratitude, docility, and intelligence in the dog are familiar to almost every one. And we find that exclusively of the peculiar sagacity of every variety of this animal, as the shepherd's dog, the pointer, the beagle, the mastiff and others, their fidelity to their master is always conspicuous.

Dr. Abell, in one of his Lectures on Phrenology, related a very striking anecdote of a Newfoundland dog in Cork. This dog was of a noble and generous disposition; and when he left his master's house was often assailed by a number of little noisy dogs in the street. He usually passed them with apparent unconcern, as if they were beneath his notice. But one little cur was particularly troublesome, and at length carried his petulance so far as to bite the Newfoundland dog in the back of his foot. This proved to be a step in wanton abuse and insult beyond what was to be patiently endured; and he instantly turned round, ran after the offender, and seized him by the skin of the back. In this way he carried him in his mouth

* See Letter xiii.

to the quay, and holding him some time over the water, at length dropped him into it. He did not seem, however, to design that the culprit should be punished *capitally*; and he waited a little while till the poor animal, who was unused to that element, was not only well ducked but near sinking, when he plunged in, and brought him out safe to land.

It would be difficult to conceive any punishment more aptly contrived, or more completely in character. Indeed, if it were fully analysed, an ample commentary might be written in order to show what a variety of comparisons, and motives, and generous feelings entered into the composition of this act. It supplies at least a good moral lesson. It shows the difference between magnanimity and meanness, and by what lawful means the former may correct the latter.

It may not perhaps be going beyond the truth to assert, that the lives of many thousand human beings have been saved by the prompt aid and sagacity of the dog; as from drowning, from perilous situations, by accidents of various kinds, from premeditated murder, and from fire.

Dr. Beattie lays much stress upon an instance of this sort that occurred to a gentleman named Irvine, in crossing the river Dee, then frozen over, near Aberdeen. The ice gave way about the middle of the river, and he sunk; but having a gun in his hand, he supported himself by placing it across the opening. The dog used many fruitless efforts to save

his master, and then ran to a neighbouring village, where he saw a man, and with most significant gestures pulled him by the coat, and prevailed on him to follow him. The man arrived at the spot in time to save the gentleman's life. Beattie attributes this act to an interposition of heaven, conceiving that "the animal was qualified for it," to use his own expression, "by a supernatural impulse." And he concludes, "Here certainly was an event so uncommon, that from the known qualities of the dog, none would have expected it; and I know not whether this animal ever gave proof of extraordinary sagacity in any other instance."

Now, in as much as we might collect some hundred examples quite as striking, it is matter of surprise to find an author so well informed as Dr. Beattie, expressing himself after this manner. Whatever explanation may be given of the circumstance, it is difficult to separate the idea of direct providential interference from the following fact, which appears to be well authenticated.

"At Ditchley, near Blenheim, now the seat of Viscount Dillon, but formerly of the Lees, Earls of Lichfield, is a portrait of Sir Henry Lee, by Janson, with that of a mastiff dog which saved his life. One of Sir Henry's servants had formed the design of assassinating his master, and robbing the house; but on the night he had intended to perpetrate it, the dog, for the first time, followed Sir Henry up stairs, took his station under his bed, and could not be

driven thence: in the dead of the night, the servant not knowing the dog was there, entered the room to execute his diabolical purpose; but was instantly seized by the dog, and being secured, confessed his intentions. In a corner of the picture are these lines—

> "But in my dog, whereof I made no store,
> I find more love than those I trusted more."*

An instance somewhat resembling this of undoubted authenticity, is to be found in Gmelin's System of Natural History.

In the year 1791, a person went to a house in Deptford, to take lodgings, under pretence that he was just arrived from the West Indies; and, after having agreed on terms, said he would send his trunk that night, and come himself the next day. About nine o'clock at night, the trunk was brought by two porters, and was carried into his bed-room. Just as the family were going to bed their little house dog, deserting his usual station in the shop, placed himself close to the chamber door, where the chest was deposited, and kept up an incessant barking. The moment the door was opened, the dog flew to the

* See Gmelin's Natural History and Zoological Journal, No. I.

The circumstance which strikingly indicates an immediate interposition of Providence in the preservation of a horse and the punishment of a daring infidel, is related by Cowper in his Task. I believe it is a true story given under the fictitious names of Misagathus and Evander; and the fact is supposed to have happened in Cornwall.

chest, against which it barked and scratched with redoubled vehemence and fury. At first they tried to get the dog out of the room, but in vain. Calling in some neighbours, and making them eye witnesses of the circumstance, they began to move the trunk about, when they quickly discovered that it contained something alive. Suspicion falling very strong, they were induced to open it, when to their utter astonishment, who should present himself, but their new lodger, who had been thus conveyed in, to rob the house.

A vessel deeply laden with corn in the Ipswich river, had a dog on board, which, when they had got only a few leagues out to sea, suddenly left the vessel, and jumped into the boat. The crew were surprised at this; and the captain suspecting something was wrong, ordered the hatches to be opened, when they discovered that a plank had been started, and the hold was filling fast with water. They had only time to get into the boat, being unable to save any thing out of the vessel, which soon sunk. (Wakefield.)

The sagacity of dogs employed in conducting blind mendicants, is known to almost every one, and volumes might be filled with anecdotes of them.

A short time since I observed an interesting account of a dog in New York. This animal belonged to the carrier of a newspaper; and his master being ill, his son took his place; but being ignorant of the

subscribers, the dog who had attended his father in his rounds, trotted along before him and stopped at every subscriber's door, without a single mistake.

The keeper of a tap room in Glasgow has a dog of the Irish bull breed, possessed of uncommon sagacity: so that he is said to be as good as a servant. Nearly three years since it began to carry its master his breakfast in a tin-can between its teeth. When the family moved, the dog altered his route, and has never gone wrong: nor will he accept of any favour, when on his master's business. He avoids any of his own species also when on business. Though what he carries is often tempting, he faithfully delivers it untouched; he carries letters; and brings beef from market to the extent of half a stone. He carries his master's hat or shoes. He will take a snuff box or other article to such of the neighbours as he knows. He will take a bank note to the tap-room and bring the change in silver. He understands Gaelic as well as English.

I presume most of my readers are acquainted with the beautiful lines by Scott, on the melancholy death of Charles Gough, who lost his way near Helvellyn Mountain in a fog, and fell down a precipice; at the bottom of which his bones were discovered three months after, attended all that time by his faithful dog.

"Dark green was that spot, 'mid the brown mountain heather,
Where the pilgrim of nature lay stretched in decay;
Like the corpse of an outcast, abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay;
Nor yet quite deserted, tho' lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much lov'd remains of his master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away."

Scott.

One cannot reflect on the innumerable instances of the love and usefulness of this animal without being grateful to Providence for having given to man a creature capable of many of those noble and disinterested feelings, which we are accustomed to appreciate so highly in our fellow-creatures, and almost to look upon as constituting the perfection of the human character.

The following is a striking instance of sagacity in a bull, communicated on undoubted authority.

A gentleman in Scotland near Laggan, had a bull which grazed with the cows in the open meadows. As fences are scarcely known in that part, a boy was kept to watch, lest the cattle should trespass on the neighbouring fields and destroy the corn. The boy was fat and drowsy, and was often found asleep: he was of course chastised whenever the cattle trespassed. Warned by this, he kept a long switch, and with it revenged himself with an unsparing hand if they exceeded their boundary. The bull seemed to

have observed with concern this consequence of their transgression: and as he had no horns he used to strike the cows with his hard forehead, and thus punish them severely, if any one crossed the boundary. In the mean time he set them a good example himself, never once entering upon the forbidden bounds, and placing himself before the cows in a threatening attitude, if they approached it. At length his honesty and vigilance became so obvious, that the boy was employed in weeding and other business, without fear of their misbehaviour in his absence.* ,

Much might be said on the imitating qualities of the ape, but imitation is very inferior to the qualities we have been considering. The parrot in this way can be taught to repeat words as well as the jay, magpie, and starling; but these birds do not seem capable of reflexion, much less of rational comparison. Education seems to give them what the American mock bird possesses by Instinct. The natural notes of this bird are musical and solemn, and it can assume the tone of every other animal in the wood, from the wolf to the raven. It seems even to sport itself in leading them astray. It will sometimes allure the lesser birds with the call of their mates, and then terrify them when they have come near with screams like the eagle. There is no bird in the forest which it cannot mimick. But its own notes are so sweet and various as to equal, if not exceed, the nightingale. For what end nature endowed it with such peculiar

* Instinct Displayed, Letter xxxiv.

versatility of notes, or natural imitative powers, does not appear. (Goldsmith.)

Although the parrot is chiefly remarkable for his learning to speak by rote, yet the account which Locke has given from an author of great note, of a parrot in Brazil, would lead us to conclude that these birds are capable of a considerable degree of reflexion. Indeed it would scarcely be credited, if it was not supported by such authority.

"I had a mind (says he) to know from Prince Maurice's own mouth, the account of a common, but much credited story, that I had heard so often from many others, of an old parrot he had in Brazil, during his government there, that spoke, and asked, and answered common questions like a reasonable creature; so that those of his train there, generally concluded it to be witchery or possession; and one of his chaplains, who lived long afterwards in Holland, would never from that time endure a parrot, but said they all had a devil in them. I had heard many particulars of this story, and assevered by people hard to be discredited, which made me ask Prince Maurice what there was of it. He said, with his usual dryness and plainness in talk, that there was something true but a great deal false of what had been reported. I desired to know of him, what there was of the first? He told me short and coldly, that he had heard of such an old parrot when he came to Brazil, and though he believed nothing of it, and it was a good way off, yet he had so much curiosity as to send for it; that it was a very great and a very old one, and when

it came first into the room where the Prince was, with a great many Dutchmen about him, it said presently, 'What a company of white men are here!' —They asked it what he thought that man was, pointing at the Prince:—it answered, 'Some general or other.' When they brought it close to him, he asked it, 'D'ou venez-vous?'—it answered, 'de Marinnan.' (The Prince.) 'A qui êtes-vous?'—(Parrot.) 'A un Portugais.'—(Prince.) 'Que fais-tu là?'—(Parrot.) 'Je garde les poules:'—The Prince laughed and said, 'Vous gardez les poules?'—The parrot answered, 'Oui moi, et je sais bien faire;'—and made the *chuck* four or five times, that people use to make to chickens when they call them.—I set down the words of this worthy dialogue in French, just as Prince Maurice said them to me. I asked him in what language the parrot spoke, and he said in Brazilian; I asked whether he understood Brazilian; he said, No: but he had taken care to have two interpreters by him, the one a Dutchman that spoke Brazilian, and the other a Brazilian that spoke Dutch; that he asked them separately and privately, and both of them agreed in telling him just the same thing that the parrot said.—I could not but tell this odd story, because it is so much out of the way, and from the first hand, and what may pass for a good one; for I dare say this prince, at least, believed himself in all he told me, having ever passed for a very honest and pious man; I leave it to naturalists to reason, and to other men to believe, as they please upon it; however,

it is not perhaps amiss to relieve or enliven a busy scene sometimes with such digressions, whether to the purpose or no."*

Of all animals, with whose history and manners we are properly acquainted, the elephant is most remarkable both for docility and intelligence. On this subject, however, I shall be very brief, as it is needless to repeat the various anecdotes which are to be found in works of natural history relative to this animal.

In the East, the elephant not only contributes to the state and pomp of princes, but is employed in various useful labours requiring art and strength. He lades a boat in a river with surprising dexterity, carefully keeping all the articles dry, and disposing them so judiciously that their arrangement seldom needs to be changed. In raising wheeled carriages, heavily loaded, up an acclivity, he pushes the carriage forward with his front, advances, supports it with his knee, and renews his effort. When dragging a beam of wood along the ground, he removes obstacles to make it run smoothly and easily.

The elephant loves his keeper. He distinguishes the tones of command, of anger, and of approbation, and regulates his actions by his perceptions. His attachment and affection are sometimes so strong and durable that he has been known to die of grief when, in an unguarded fit of rage, he had killed his keeper. He is more easily tamed by mildness than by blows. He is proud and ambitious, yet so grateful for good

* Locke's Essay, Chap. xxvii.

usage, that he has been often known to bow the head in passing houses where he had been hospitably received. Elephants are remarkably fond of children, and seem to discern the innocence of their manners. They often allow themselves to be led and commanded by a child, and sometimes act as its keeper. Dr. Darwin assures us that it is not uncommon for the keeper of an elephant, in his journey in India, to leave him fixed to the ground by a length of chain, when he goes into the woods to collect food for him, with a child yet unable to walk, under his protection; and the intelligent animal not only defends it, but as the child creeps about, when it arrives at the extremity of his chain, he wraps his trunk gently round its body, and brings it again into the centre of his circle.

A very affecting story is told by Pliny. Elephants used to be exhibited at Rome to be driven about in the circus, and slain with darts. A number of these animals were on one occasion, exhibited in this way by Pompey; and when they found themselves destined to immediate death, they made a vigorous effort to break through the iron railing in which they were enclosed: frustrated in the attempt, with a wailing voice, and in a suppliant posture, they seemed to implore the compassion of the spectators; and so impulsively were the whole people affected with the distress and sensibility of those majestic animals, that with one assent, they arose, and in tears imprecated destruction on the head of the magnificent general,

who entertained them with that splendid spectacle ;— imprecations, says the historian, which soon after took effect.

D'Obsonville says, that in Laknaor, the capital of Soubah, during the rage of an epidemic disease, the principal road to the palace gate was covered with sick and dying wretches, extended on the ground, and unable to move, at a time when the nabob was to pass on his elephant. The cold selfishness of the prince, the haste with which he was to pass, and the heavy steps of the elephant, seemed to threaten inevitable death to a number of the miserable subjects. But the noble animal, without receiving any command to the purpose, and even without slackening his pace, dexterously assisted the poor creatures with his trunk, removing some, raising others, and stepping over the rest, so that none suffered the slightest injury.

On taking a review of most, if not all, the actions of the lower animals we have been last considering, I think it must be obvious, that whether we allow them reason or not, the actions themselves comprehend those elements of Reason, if I may so speak, which we commonly refer to rational beings. So that if the same actions had been done by our fellow creatures, we should have ascribed them without hesitation to motives and feelings worthy of a rational nature. It is certain that most of these animals in their several *rational* acts (if I may call them such) show every outward sign of consciousness or knowledge

of the end of their actions—a consciousness, too, immediately directed to the welfare of man; not like the fixed and uniform operations of Instinct, which pays no regard to man, but, when acting in the brutes, is wholly employed in their self-preservation, or in providing for their young.

As no man, then, can clearly point out, by what delicate and hidden steps, even the human mind is conducted in passing from premises to conclusion; as he cannot trace what animal propensities, and feelings of his sensitive nature, and prejudices, and moral principles govern and influence his various decisions, constituting what he calls an act of human reason, farther than the end can be accounted for by the means; so neither can he comprehend the impelling motives of the brute, except by their visible actions. If these visible actions, therefore, correspond with his own ideas of what is excellent in feeling and judgment, they must either proceed from faculties like those of that part of human nature to which the brute is clearly allied, or from a much higher source. But as they do not appear to belong to Instinct, or a necessary and unavoidable impulse compelling them to act, nor yet to those more dignified principles of the human character, of which the brute shows no signs; they may be considered analogous to those principles which govern human beings themselves under corresponding circumstances; and consequently presuppose a limited degree of *rationality*, as we strictly apply the term.

Instances of sagacity in many other animals might also be collected;—sufficient to show that when occasion seems to call forth their energies, a display of intellect follows which ought rather to be considered as a matter of course, than of very anomalous occurrence. For these instances of sagacity are too numerous in the brute creation to constitute what may be termed *rare exceptions*. We might with nearly as much propriety make extraordinary instances of sagacity in our own species, exceptions to the common rule, by taking uncivilized tribes as models from which to form a true estimate of the human character. Animals in the wild state fulfil the intentions of nature more perfectly than man in the civilized. And, again, many animals, when domesticated or trained to useful purposes, and associated with civilized man, display signs of affection, gratitude, and ingenuity, with other noble and excellent traits of character, which, considering they are not bound by the obligation of any moral duties, are truly wonderful.

It would be easy to add anecdotes of many other animals to those I have collected: and I would just repeat the observation, that in contemplating the acts in question, there is every reason to think, the animals are in a good degree conscious of the end and design of such acts, perhaps as much so as many of our fellow creatures are, when lending their assistance to us in the same way. But this cannot be proved: nor can it ever amount to more than a high degree of probability; for the want of artificial signs,

without doubt very wisely, prevents all mental intercourse between man and the brute. So that we can never understand to what degree they are conscious agents, beyond the outward evidence of natural language. If it should be thought by some a mark of the *irrational* or brute nature not to comprehend the connexion of means and ends and to be unconscious of design, it is on the other hand sufficiently clear, that like the lower animals in many instances, multitudes of our fellow creatures suffer themselves to be employed in various operations, and frequently act without having any clear knowledge of the complicated means or end which the superior understanding, whatever it is, to which they submit themselves, has in view.

How far the words *rational* and *irrational*, have been used legitimately, to distinguish man and the brute, I shall not pretend to say. But if I may appeal to such an authority, there appears to me no ground in Scripture for the use of the word Reason, as it is applied in the present day, in this distinguishing sense. It occurs only in Daniel, as a power of the intellect, where it is said "Nebuchadnezar's reason returned unto him:" and the same Hebrew word, two verses before, is translated, *Understanding*; in other parts, *Reason* is used for mere argument, or discussion of opinion. *Understanding* is the term we meet with in Scripture, which refers to something higher than mere human or outward knowledge, and

is generally classed with *Wisdom.* " Buy wisdom and instruction, and *understanding*"—" He hath stretched out the heavens by his *understanding*"—" The inspiration of the Almighty giveth *understanding.*"—" My people have no *understanding.*"

It is clear that the word applies to knowledge, above *that* which relates to the common concerns of life: and, it moreover appears, that *a mere reasoning or comparing faculty* is not once referred to as the exclusive privilege of man.

I mention these few things to show that so far as we can gather from the use of terms, the Scripture affords us no light by which we can discriminate between the truly intellectual and animal nature, (for I do not now speak of the divine influence in man,) and that the words *rational* and *irrational,* as applied specifically to make a formal distinction between man and the brute, with regard to their respective faculties for acquiring outward knowledge, are inventions of the schools, rather by assumption than by proof.

I wish therefore to be understood to say, that there is no more ground for making an essential distinction between those outward faculties in man and the brute, which compare ideas in order to draw simple inferences, than for making a distinction in kind between their respective powers of *remembering.* So that, if the brute can remember by his creaturely mind or animal nature, so may he reason, as far as

his limited capacity will enable him to do so, by the same animal nature. I make no reference here, to those higher principles in the human mind, which are far above outward reason; and of which the brute certainly knows nothing.

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CHAP. V.

OF THE ACCOMMODATING POWER OF INSTINCT, AND INFERENCES FROM THE FACTS.

In the preceding Chapter, I have spoken of pure Instincts, which act without any instruction, prior to all experience. I have also spoken of the natural senses and their perfection in man and the brutes, as well as of some anomalous acts of the latter exhibited in their migrations; and have lastly given some examples of the higher qualities in the minds of brutes, which are depending on instruction and education, like human reason. I shall now very briefly notice another train of actions or modified instincts, if they may be so called, in which the brutes, without instruction from man, appear to deviate in some degree from the unerring rule of Instinct, and adapt their conduct to circumstances. Dr. Darwin is very anxious to prove that these deviations arise from a reasoning faculty.

We are told by Adanson, that Rabbits in the island of Sor, near Senegal, do not burrow in the earth;

hence Dr. Darwin suspects that their digging themselves houses in this cold climate is an acquired art.

In Senegal, where the heat is great, the Ostrich neglects her eggs during the day, but sits upon them in the night. At the Cape of Good Hope, however, where the heat is less, she sits upon her eggs, both day and night.

It is said that the Bees that were taken to Barbadoes and other islands of the West Indies, ceased to lay up honey after the first year, as they found it not useful to them; and are now become very troublesome to the inhabitants, by infesting their sugar houses.

In Jamaica, however, they continue to make honey, as the cold north winds or rainy seasons of that island confine them at home, for several weeks together.

And the Bees of Senegal, which differ from those of Europe only in size, make their honey not only superior to ours in delicacy of flavour, but it has this singularity, that it never concretes but remains liquid as syrup.

This accommodating variation in the instinct of the bee, may, however, be partly explained by the operation of human intercourse. Because, if the bees had not sugar houses or some other large depositories of this sweet substance to resort to, it is most probable, they would make honey in the usual way. And the difference in the qualities of the honey in Senegal from our own, may be referable to a difference in the flowers from which it is collected. We know

that even in England and Ireland, the honey made in one district frequently differs in flavour, and sometimes in other qualities, from that made in another.

The Wasp of this country fixes his habitation under ground, that he may not be affected with the various changes of our climate; but in Jamaica he hangs it on the bough of a tree, where the seasons are less severe.

Loubière, in his history of Siam, says, "That in a part of that kingdom, which lies open to great inundations, all the Ants make their settlements upon trees; no ants' nests are to be seen any where else." Whereas in our country the ground is their only situation.

In countries infested with monkies, birds, which in other climates build in bushes and clefts of trees, suspend their nests on slender twigs, and thus elude their enemies. The same species of birds build their nests differently, when climate and circumstances require it. (Rees' Cyclop.)

Dr. Darwin has collected many facts to show that the Cuckoo in some places hatches and educates her own young: while in others, she builds no nest, but uses that of some lesser bird, as the wagtail or hedge sparrow, and depositing one egg in it, takes no further care of her progeny.

The Swallow sometimes migrates; sometimes is found torpid in the hollow of rocks, and even under water. Other birds migrate from some countries and remain stationary in others; as is the case with

certain animals. So that emigrations would seem to depend on want of food, inclement seasons, or unfriendly climates.

Ulloa mentions that in Juan Fernandes the Dogs did not attempt to bark, till some European dogs were put among them; and then they gradually began to imitate them; but in a strange manner at first, as if they were learning a thing that was not natural to them. Linnæus, indeed, observes, that the dogs of South America do not bark at strangers; and the European dogs, carried to Guinea, are said in three or four generations to cease to bark, and only howl like the dogs, natives of that coast.

From some of these and other similar facts, Dr. Darwin contends, "That the migrations of birds are not instinctive, but accidental improvements, like the arts among mankind, taught by their contemporaries, or delivered by tradition:—that the arts of bees, wasps, and ants, if we were better acquainted with their histories, have arisen in the same manner from experience and tradition, as the arts of our own species; though their reasoning is from fewer ideas." —"And, that as animals seem to have undergone great changes, as well as the inanimate parts of the earth, and are probably still in a state of gradual improvement, it is not unreasonable to conclude, that some of the actions, both of large animals and of insects, may have been acquired in a *state preceding the present one*; and have been derived from the parents to their offspring by imitation or other kind

of tradition :—For that, as the eggs of the crocodile are hatched by the sun, and the eggs of insects and spawn of fish, by the vernal warmth, this might have been the case with birds in warm climates, in their early state, and they might have learned to incubate their eggs, as they became more perfect animals, or removed into colder climates."*

Dr. Darwin was possessed of uncommon genius, and yet one would wonder that any man of scientific observation would give the authority of his name to such opinions. He certainly carries the notion of a reasoning or adapting power in insects and brutes, to the very extreme of that hypothesis. According to it, the lower animals have no instinct at all; but experience and observation determine all their actions; and it must appear strange, that while many eminent philosophers maintain that the human infant could not subsist without its instincts; by this hypothesis, the lower animals should all be guided in every case by reason. The error seems to lie in confounding all the motive powers and faculties of brutes together; so that instinct, and sensation, and memory, and imitation, and feeling, as gratitude and revenge, are all resolvable into reason. This is as absurd, as to resolve them all into instinct.

It is much more consistent with the nature of all the various phenomena we have been considering, to suppose—

* See Temple of Nature, Notes, 40.

First,—That seeing many of the natural operations of the lower animals are so complicated, yet so perfect and invariable, it is almost irrational to suppose them acquainted with the rules of the arts which they practice so skilfully or the ends for which they operate; and, therefore, that they are guided by an instinctive power, only known to Him who thus directs them unerringly in all their ways.

2d.—Taking Instinct therefore to be a principle in the constitution of animals, given them by their maker for the purpose of preserving the individuals and continuing the kind; its accommodating itself to circumstances and situations, is no argument against its existence, nor a good proof that it is always the result of reasoning. Because He who made it a part of the constitution of his creatures, knows that the same ends must be often sought by different means; especially when times, places, and circumstances, are altered. For if this accommodating property were not imparted to Instinct, it would not produce the effects for which it seems intended; as we know that it is impossible that similar means should produce similar effects, when circumstances, climates, and situations, are different. The accommodating variations only occur where the disadvantages exist, against which the Instinct is intended to provide.*

Therefore, so far as I can judge, the examples which have been given,—and they are chiefly selected from the Zoonomia of Dr. Darwin,—as proofs of this

* See Rees' Cyclop. article Instinct.

accommodating faculty, are not strong enough to weaken the force of the general definition of Instinct. These examples serve rather to show that instinct in the brute is not so mechanical in its operation as to admit of no possible deviation: and that animals themselves, unlike pieces of mechanism, are capable of being instructed by circumstances, in what immediately concerns their well-being. For it is to be understood, that in the wise economy of nature, no species of animal can be detached from the rest without more or less disorder; and that its well-being is subservient to the whole scheme of Providence in the outward creation.

3dly.—That as the natural senses in man, by necessity and particular modes of life, are often possessed in high perfection, so likewise are the natural senses in the lower animals; and as we do not confound our own natural senses with our instincts, so neither ought we to confound the perfection of the natural senses in animals with their instincts, nor yet with that conscious intelligence they sometimes display in their intercourse with man.

4thly.—That some animals do, notwithstanding, show indications of a sense which is quite anomalous and inexplicable, yet scarcely to be classed with instinctive propensities, as was spoken of in the bat, in some migratory tribes, and even in the sheep and dog.

And lastly.—That by education and training, in their intercourse with man, many of the higher orders

of brutes are rendered capable of important changes, and display signs of uncommon sagacity and reasoning: but while they acquire knowledge and many useful qualities, fitting them to be our companions, they lose their instincts or natural propensities, or may even be brought to act in a manner directly contrary to these instincts.

Upon the latter qualities in the lower animals,—especially their docility and intelligence, it may be useful to subjoin a few remarks, with which I shall conclude this outline of a very extensive subject. By means of their docility, we may perceive, to what important purposes they are subservient in the economy of human society: and yet their intelligence or power of comparing and drawing conclusions, and adapting means to ends, is so wisely limited by divine Providence, that they are prevented from ever combining or rebelling in concert to injure their protector, who sometimes proves their oppressor; while they are capable of such a measure of reasoning, as qualifies them to know our wants and desires, to comprehend the reliance we place upon their ready service, and to afford their prompt assistance in extricating us from danger. It is easy to perceive that they are fixed by an unalterable decree to a subordinate station in the world, and that they are hence incapable of rising above a certain rank in the creation. But if we adopted Darwin's opinion, there is no saying how far their fancied progressive improvement might reach. Within this limited range, therefore,

their powers of reasoning extend. It seems as evident to me, says Locke, that some animals do, in certain instances, reason, as that they have sense; but it is only in particular ideas, just as they receive them from the senses." Locke is not disposed to allow them the power of abstraction. It is however well observed by the writer of the article Instinct in Rees' Cyclopœdia, that "there are many facts from which it is evident, that brutes on some occasions exhibit proofs of this faculty." And to this opinion I assent.*

Now, if we compare our own mental constitution with that of brutes,—however we may excel them, as we certainly do, in some noble capacities and principles, exclusively belonging to our moral nature;—yet we possess many faculties and powers precisely analogous to theirs; and the motives and combined operation of these, it is often as difficult to understand, as it is those of the lower animals. So that it might be as hard a matter to prove that many acts of human volition were deliberate acts of the reasoning faculty in its abstract sense, as many actions of the lower animals:—such a variety of motives and im-

* In allusion to the reasoning of animals, Milton says,—

"Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air
Replenished, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? They also know
And *reason* not contemptibly. With these
Find pastime."

pulses may govern the decision of a human being, prompting him to act, *not* according to the standard of reason, but according to the scale of sense or passion, and low desire. For, how rarely does enlightened reason, setting aside the higher influence of moral duty, determine the conduct of man!

In common with the brutes we have our instincts, our imitative powers, our natural senses perfect or imperfect according to their use, our capabilities of improvement by discipline and education, our animal propensities and passions, our feelings benevolent and malevolent, our faculties of remembering and of comparing or judging. Perhaps also they may partake with us in some others. But these are sufficient to show what a compound is man,—of mean and noble —of evil and good—how prone to the impulse of nature from his very constitution, like the brute, and how rarely asserting the prerogative of his superior rank in the creation, by purifying his rational and moral decisions and general conduct from the contamination of sordid motives, so as to reason and act like a being formed after the image of the Deity.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE ASCENDING SCALE OF INSTINCTIVE OR UNCONSCIOUS MOTIONS—COMPRISING INANIMATE, VEGETABLE, AND ANIMAL MOTIONS.

SECT. I.

Of Inanimate and Vegetable Motions.

I AM ready to believe that we shall be better able to judge of the relation, which appears to subsist between Instinct and the higher attributes of the human mind, as well as of that subsisting between man and the brute, after we have ascended the scale of natural operations, even from those of inanimate matter, through the several gradations of Being, up to man himself.

We shall find that at every step in this ascent, although many of these operations may not be justly denominated *instinctive*, yet in as much as they are *surely* and *determinately*, though in some cases *blindly*

effected, they are analogous to those of *Instinct*, and are only referable to the same ultimate cause.

Hence, this survey may be the means of connecting in the mind more perfectly the chain of argument; as we shall thus have an opportunity of referring *Instinct* to its proper source—the pervading influence of the Deity in all his works; and also of referring *reason* to its proper source—the outward or reflected light of nature, alone and unassisted, constituted as the leader of the natural faculties, which, by experience and observation, enables man to use the means, placed abundantly within his reach, for all his outward conveniencies and lawful enjoyments in life.

Of unconscious Motions in Unorganized Matter.

In contemplating the phenomena of the material world, we perceive that all the grand operations of nature are in perfect harmony, and proceed with admirable order. The motion of the earth in its orbit; the vicissitudes of the seasons; the distribution of heat and cold; the growth and decay of vegetables and animals, and their mutual dependencies:—in short, all the phenomena taking place upon our globe that are not under the immediate controul of man, are displayed with consummate wisdom.

We may observe, however, that when man interferes,—so far as he can interfere, by reason of the portion of free agency with which his Maker has endowed him,—then, he may either co-operate with, or oppose, the intelligent designs of Providence; and his happiness or misery,—and in degree also the beauty or deformity of the Lord's creation,—are the result of his own free will. For, to a limited extent, we have power over the face of nature, as well as rightful dominion over the beast of the field. We can plant a forest in the plain, or disencumber the plain of the shady forest. We can cultivate the barren field, and drain the noisome marsh, or leave it to exhale pernicious effluvia, hurtful to man and beast; so that the very soil may be either a blessing or a curse to its possessor. For he may raise the poisonous weed, instead of the wholesome nutritious grain; and by his imprudence may suffer the flocks to be cut off from the fold, and, through want of timely care, thousands of his dependent fellow-creatures to languish in misery, who might otherwise rejoice around him.

Now, if we consider the stupendous phenomena of the material world, celestial and terrestrial, we cannot hesitate to believe, that with regard to the heavenly bodies, either in their internal structure or in the element through which they move, a power has been impressed upon these masses of matter by Omnipotence, which directs them, though unconsciously, with unerring certainty in their course.

The earth completes its orbit, and the moon performs its revolutions; the tides swell and retreat; and the currents of the atmosphere flow, either in gentle breezes or in blustering storms. Heat and cold have their appointed limits like the ocean; and the potent electric fire passes from the earth to the air, and from the air again to the earth.—They all execute their commissions with sure and determinate efficiency; and the reason of man has no power either to aid or retard a single event.

Now these effects, whether they proceed from the secondary laws of attraction and gravitation, or from some other hidden cause, are without doubt under the immediate controul of the divine architect. The mode of their impulse is indeed mysterious and unknown; but we neither think it fit to designate this impulse by the term Instinct, Reason, or Inspiration, as the ruling principle of action.

In the vegetable kingdom, likewise, the seed chooses the fit soil; it spreads the root to receive nourishment; the plant soon appears at a time when the outward air is fitted to cherish its growth, and the juices are propelled forward through a thousand tubes to promote the fructification and the increase: but this is all in obedience to a moving and living energy infused by the Creator.

This living energy in plants, though perfect in its kind, is, notwithstanding, of a very inferior nature compared with that of animals: but in what way the

internal structure gives rise to the phenomena of vegetation, the human mind is unable to comprehend. The microscope has done no more than show us a difference of structure in every different plant. The active power is as great a mystery now, as it was ages ago. The manner in which the organization of a plant is excited by outward stimuli is unknown. If we call it irritability to distinguish it from sensation, or the sentient principle of animals, we only remove the difficulty one step. We reason in a circle instead of coming nearer to the point; and distinguish one thing from another—as the vegetable from the animal—without knowing the principle of life in either. In fact we distinguish them only by a few obvious or outward shades of difference, without being able to mark out the true lines of separation.

The transition from plants to animals is allowed to be almost imperceptible. For, the animated sea-nettle fixed to the rock, that stretches out its numerous feelers to receive its food, is but a little way removed from the plant fixed in the earth, that pushes its roots in the direction of water, or whatever else in its vicinity may contribute to its growth. And the motions of some plants in appearance come very near to the principle in animals, which is expressed by the term *conscious feeling*. Yet, though we do not understand them, we cannot believe that it is any thing but appearance. Some of these motions in vegetable life are, indeed, remarkable. For, a plant, reared in a dark cellar, (if some light be admitted) will bend

itself towards the light; or, if made to grow in a flower-pot, with its head downward, it will turn its head upward, according to the natural position of a plant. If a root be uncovered, and not exposed to much heat, and a wet spunge is placed near it, but in a direction opposite to that in which the root is proceeding, in a short time the root will turn towards the spunge. In this way the direction of roots may be varied at pleasure.

All plants make the strongest efforts by inclining, turning, and even twisting their stems and branches, to escape from darkness and shade, and to procure the influences of the sun. If a vessel of water be placed within six inches of a growing cucumber, in twenty-four hours the cucumber alters the direction of its branches, and never stops till it comes into contact with the water. When a pole is placed at a considerable distance from an unsupported vine, the branches of which are proceeding in a contrary direction from that of the pole, in a short time it alters its course, and stops not till it clings around the pole. But the same vine will carefully avoid attaching itself to low vegetables nearer to it, as the cabbage. Hence Pliny and Cicero remark, that the vine hates the colewort and cabbage;* as if it possessed the faculty of perception and the power of choosing.

* "The vine hates the cabbage and all kinds of pot-herbs."
Pliny.

"The vine is said to avoid the colewort and cabbage, if planted near it, as if they were noxious and pestilential." *Cicero.*

In his Philosophy of Natural History, Smellie has given several examples of different kinds of motion in the vegetable kingdom.

"When the roots of a tree meet with a stone, or other obstacle, in order to avoid it, they change their former direction; and when trees grow near a ditch, the roots which proceed in a direction that would necessarily bring them into the open air, instead of continuing this noxious progress, sink below the level of the ditch, then shoot across, and regain the soil on the opposite side. They turn from barren to fertile earth, which indicates something analagous to a choice of food.

"The mimosa or sensitive plant possesses the faculty of motion in an eminent degree. The slightest touch makes its leaves suddenly shrink, and together with the branch, bend down toward the earth. But the hedysarum movens, or moving plant, furnishes one of the most singular examples of vegetable motion. It is a native of the East Indies. Its movements are not excited by the contact of external bodies, but solely by the influence of the sun's rays. The motions of this plant are confined to the leaves; which move briskly in every direction when the sun shines. They move upward and downward; but sometimes turn almost round, twisting their foot-stalks. As long as the heat of the sun continues, these motions go on incessantly; but they cease during the night, and when the weather is cold and cloudy.

"The American plant, called dionœa muscipula or

Venus's fly-trap, affords another instance of rapid vegetable motion. Its leaves are jointed and furnished with two rows of strong prickles. The surfaces of the leaves secrete a sweet liquor, which allures the approach of flies. When these parts are touched by the legs of a fly, the two lobes of the leaf instantly rise up, the rows of prickles lock themselves fast together, and squeeze the poor captive to death. A straw or pin will excite the same motions.

"Many leaves, as those of the mallow, follow the course of the sun. In the morning their upper surfaces are presented to the east; at noon to the south; and at sun-set to the west. During the night, or in rainy weather, their leaves are horizontal."

"The *sleep of plants*, as it has been called, affords another curious instance of vegetable motion. The leaves of many plants fold up during the night; but at the approach of the sun they expand. The modes of folding in the leaves are extremely various: but it is peculiarly worthy of attention, that they all dispose themselves so as to give the best protection to the young stems, flowers, buds, or fruit. For example, the leaves of the tamarind tree contract round the tender fruit, and protect it from the nocturnal cold. The cassia or senna, the glycine, and many of the papilionaceous plants, contract their leaves in a similar manner. The leaves of the chickweed, of the asclepias, atriplex, &c. are disposed in opposite pairs. During the night they rise perpendicularly, and join so close at the top, that they conceal the flowers.

The leaves of the sida or althea Theophrasti, of the ayenia, and œnothera, are placed alternately. Though horizontal, or even depending during the day, at the approach of night they rise, embrace the stem, and protect the tender flowers.

"The leaves of the solanum or night shade, are horizontal during the day; but, in the night they rise and cover the flowers. The Egyptian vetch erects its leaves during the night, in such a manner that each pair seem to be one leaf only. The leaves of the white lupine, in the state of sleep, hang down and protect the young buds from being injured by the nocturnal air."

The flowers also, as well as the leaves, have the power of moving. During the night, many of them are inclosed in their calyx. Some, as of the German spurge, geranium striatum, and common whitlow grass, when asleep, hang their mouths toward the earth, to prevent the noxious effects of rain or dew. It is probable that such flowers are not defended by their leaves.

It would appear that this *sleep of plants* was designed for the perfection of the seed. For, those plants, the seed-receptacles of which are sufficiently secure, never sleep; and a plant after fructification sleeps no more.

The cause of these movements in plants has been ascribed to the presence or absence of the sun's rays. Some motions are evidently excited by heat. But plants kept in an equal temperature in a hot-house,

fail not to contract their leaves, or to sleep, in the same manner as when they are exposed to the open air. This fact evinces, that the sleep of plants is rather owing to *a peculiar law*, than to a quicker or slower motion of the juices.

All the facts I have enumerated on vegetable life, tend obviously to prove that plants are endowed with internal powers of self preservation quite independent of man, which watch over them continually, in a manner as incomprehensible, yet as efficient, as the instinctive actions of animals. And this power, for want of a better name, or a better knowledge of the cause, has been termed the *principle of vegetation.* But, in what manner the motions of plants just noticed differ from the motions which are thought to depend on a distinct principle belonging to a muscular fibre in animals, we are quite ignorant. It is hardly likely that the fibrous texture of plants and of their vessels, though possessed of elasticity, has any thing like the property of alternate contraction and relaxation known to exist in the true muscular fibre of animals; yet plants, as we have seen, are excited to very curious movements. So that in the infinitely wise economy of nature, similar effects may be accomplished by a different organization. Varied, however, as this may be, there is still something beyond which is inexplicable. We cannot doubt that the structure of leaves and flowers is as well adapted to the delicate stimuli acting upon them to excite their movements, such as light and heat, as the structure of animals is

to the grosser kind of elements with which they come in contact. On whatever principle vegetable motions depend, elasticity or irritability, it is generally allowed that the motions of animals arise from the irritability of a muscular fibre. This irritability, however, though admitted as a fact, is obscure or inexplicable in its cause and mode of operation. It is no less mysterious *how* a simple muscular fibre should possess the inherent power of contraction and relaxation, should become weak or strong by exhaustion or tone; than it is *how* the simplest animal structure should be able to commence, continue, and suspend its spontaneous motions.

Sect. II.

Of Animal Motions.

Beyond the sphere of vegetation, the system of vital irritability is presumed to commence; but the barrier is so ill defined, that we can scarcely tell where the first actually terminates, and where the latter begins.

Notwithstanding the subject of muscular motion has been investigated by some of the most learned and ingenious men, it still remains involved in the greatest obscurity. A medical writer well observes, that "although many curious observations have been made, and as far as the laws of *dead* mechanism can be ap-

plied to a living machine, the investigators may have been successful: yet still there has been a *ne plus ultra*, a certain barrier by which their investigations have been limited, which no person has hitherto been able to pass, and which it is very improbable ever will be passed."

That unknown property by which a muscle when wounded, touched or irritated, contracts, independently of the will of the animal that is the object of the experiment, and without its feeling pain, is called by Haller, its *vis insita*, or inherent power.

Now it is to be observed that the *vis nervea*, or nervous power, which Dr. Monro, in accounting for muscular motion, contrasts with the *vis insita*, comes to the muscle from without, that is, from the influence of a brain and nervous system; whereas the *vis insita* resides constantly in the muscle itself. The nervous power ceases when life is destroyed; the other appears, from experiments, to remain for some time after death; the nervous power is also suppressed by tying a ligature upon the nerve, by hurting the brain, or by taking opium. The *vis insita* suffers nothing from all these circumstances; it remains after the nerve going to the muscle is tied; it continues in the intestines, though they be taken out of the body and cut in pieces; it appears with great strength in such animals as are destitute of brain: that part of the body is moved which has no feeling; and the parts of the body feel which are without

motion. The will excites and removes the nervous power, but has no power over the *vis insita.**

Sir Gilbert Blane in his Croonian Lecture, delivered in the year 1788, considers, in the course of his reasoning, that the nervous system is not only a mere appendage to life, or muscular irritability, but that it tends to impede its operation, and to shorten its existence. Hence he maintains that muscular irritability does not depend upon a sentient principle. Many animals, it is well known, exist without brain or nerves. This was first observed by Haller, and was confirmed by Hunter: who maintains farther that the stomach is the centre or seat of life, and more essential to it than the brain. That the stomach should be an organ of so much consequence, seems natural enough, from the importance of its function, which is that of assimilation or nutrition; and life can be more immediately and completely extinguished by an injury done to it, such as a blow, than by the same violence to any other part of the body. It is also well known, as before observed, that the muscular fibres of animals endowed with a nervous system, will retain their irritability for some time after their separation from the brain and nerves. And from the phenomena of vegetation, he thinks irritability may exist in nature, without sensation, consciousness, or any suspicion of the existence of a nervous system. Besides, those animals which are

* Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Dict.

destitute of brain and nerves, are of the class *vermes*, the most simple in nature, having only one function, viz. that of assimilation; and therefore not requiring that variety of action, and those perceptions, which are pecular to more complex animals.

Lastly, the state of an egg before incubation, and the condition of those animals which become torpid from cold, and afterwards revive, afford facts which favour this opinion; as they show that there is a certain principle of self-preservation, independent not only of the operation of the nervous system, but also of the circulation: for, in this quiescent state, those portions of animal matter are preserved, for a great length of time, from that corruption to which they would otherwise be liable; and their fluids are prevented from freezing in a degree of cold which would congeal them, were they destitute of every principle of life.

Sir Gilbert Blane adds, that simple life will not only survive sensation, but will survive it longer, if the animal is killed by destroying the nervous system, than if it had been killed by hæmorrhage, suffocation, or other violence. If a fish, immediately on being taken out of the water, be stunned by a violent blow on the head, the irritability and sweetness of the muscles will be preserved much longer than if it had been allowed to die with the organs of sense entire. This is so well known to fishermen, that they put it in practice, in order to make them longer susceptible of the operation called *crimping*. A salmon is one of

the fishes least tenacious of life, insomuch that it will lose all signs of life in less than half an hour after it is taken out of the water, if suffered to die without any farther injury; but if, immediately after being caught, it receives a violent blow on the head, the muscles will show visible irritability for more than twelve hours afterwards.

The same author observes, that in warm-blooded animals, an excessive exertion of voluntary motion, immediately before death, prevents the muscles from being rigid when cold, and renders them more prone to putrefaction. Thus, if an ox is killed soon after being over-driven, the carcase will not become stiff when it grows cold, nor is it capable of being preserved by means of salt. Hence also, in some disorders of the brain, as hydrocephalus, and apoplectic palsy, in which the functions of the brain are suspended, the office of digestion is sometimes better performed than in health.

Sir Gilbert Blane concludes with Hunter, that the exercise of sensation is inimical to mere animal life, and that a sort of fatigue is induced by this, as well as by voluntary motion; so that all that intercourse carried on through the nerves, whether *towards* the brain in the case of sensation, or *from* the brain in acts of volition, tends to wear out the animal powers, in other words, to exhaust the irritability. And, as intense and long continued thought, though not terminating in any outward action, tends also to produce an inability for farther exertions, it would

appear, that the brain or sensorium is more particularly the organ which is subject to that species of sufferance called *fatigue*. From these facts we may perceive the necessity of sleep, which consists in a temporary suspension of sensation, volition, and thought; and is a resource of nature, whereby the powers of life recover themselves after satiety and fatigue, *which are provided as guards to warn us* when nature is in danger of being strained, either by repletion, or over-exertion; and it is evident that such barriers were absolutely necessary, in order to set bounds to operations which are only occasionally requisite, and which would otherwise depend on the caprice of the will. The exercise of sensation and voluntary motion, in a moderate degree, is conformable to the intention of nature, and therefore salutary; and it is only when they are excessive, that they tend to wear out the powers of life, and more especially if these are not duly recruited by sleep. Man is formed for action, and without it neither mind nor body can attain its vigour. But the excess may lead to untimely decay, as the deficiency to a torpid vegetable kind of existence. Hence, in reasoning on these things, we must observe the mean. For to such a creature as man it would be no ultimate advantage that he should improve and cherish his unthinking muscular power, at the expense and loss or deterioration of his sensitive and intelligent capacities. We see, therefore, how completely it is in his power to degrade himself, by cultivating the grosser principles

of his frame, or to raise himself to his proper rank and dignity by attention to the nobler capacities of his mind. He can scarcely be perfect in intellect, and perfect in animal power at the same time: and either of these parts of his constitution will suffer, it appears, by exclusive devotion to the other.

I have considered the facts and observations on muscular motion, not only as highly interesting in themselves, but as leading us to distinguish that property of animal life called irritability, which seems to depend on the *vis insita* of the muscular fibre, from the simpler irritability or contractility of the vegetable structure, *below it*, in the chain, as well as from that more exquisite and elaborate appendage to animal life called nervous power, *above it*. Some persons have, indeed, doubted whether any animal, however simple, can have the least consciousness of existence, or the least degree of sensation, without some kind of nervous structure more or less perfect. This, however, would be to assume more than we are warranted in doing, from the latest discoveries in comparative anatomy. As far as our present knowledge reaches, distinct laws seem to belong to each of these states. And at each link of the ascending chain, by general confession, there is an impassable barrier to human research, an incomprehensible and active power working in each, like the law of gravitation in dead matter. We cannot therefore pretend to distinguish these states—viz. *vegetation*, *irritability*, and *nervous power*, any farther than by their effects.

I am disposed to think, notwithstanding, that even this slight view will enable many to correct some erroneous notions, and popular ones too, on this subject.

As an example, I may mention the common impression that the writhings, distortions, and convulsive motions, we sometimes see in animal bodies, are accompanied with pain or feeling. This is proved undoubtedly not to be always the case. It seems, however, a natural association in the mind, and probably a wise appointment to excite our humanity. Hence that philosophy must appear cold and insensible which would attempt to reason away our natural sympathies for suffering, as if they had no foundation in fact. Convulsive motions do sometimes indicate pain. But the most violent pain is often endured without them: and, inversely, the most violent convulsions are often unaccompanied with sensation.

It appears evident that those animals, which possess this irritability in the greatest perfection, are endowed with the *least* nervous power; and the more perfect the nervous structure, the more it seems to impede the full exercise of the vital irritability. This will be more obvious when we take into our consideration the facts I am about to mention: and here I may notice by the way, that although in the next section I follow some of the views of Herder in his Outlines of the Philosophy of Man, yet I cannot altogether subscribe to some of his conclusions. For after

quoting the opinion of Reimar, who has written one of the most enlightened works on the subject, '*that the instincts of animals are to be explained from the mechanism, senses and feelings, with which they are endued, and that we must admit particular determinate natural powers, and natural innate capacities, which are susceptible of no farther explication,*'* Herder announces that he does not acquiesce in the latter sentiment, but substitutes an opinion, vaguely enough expressed, that "*the composition of the whole machine from certain given powers, senses, feelings, and conceptions; in short, the organization of the creature itself constitutes the most sure direction,—the most perfect determination, that nature could impress upon her work.*"

If we examine this position, it leaves us as much in the dark, with respect to the agency of a ruling superintending power, as that of Reimar; and, by implying that the organization of the animal is *self sufficient*, gives that countenance to the sceptic which I believe Herder did not intend. It seems to imply that we may come to something capable of explanation; and yet makes nothing clearer after all the circumlocutory terms of the proposition. If Herder had not made the objection to the former, his own proposition might have appeared more admissible in itself. But the attempt to make animal organization dependent on its own powers and resources, and to explain by

* See Outlines of Philosophy, Vol. I. Book 3. Chap. 2.

technical phrases what is inexplicable, however scientifically and cautiously expressed, is too much after the manner of Lucretius. And yet if we take the word *nature* in the last line, to mean what Herder wishes it to be understood to mean, "*Almighty power, goodness, and wisdom,*"* the effect may be in part neutralized. It is certain that he did not intend to exclude such an ultimate cause; though the expressions he has used lean to that view of the question.

Sect. III.

On the connected chain of functions in Vegetable, Muscular, and Nervous systems.

After the preceding facts and observations on the instinctive motions of the vegetable and muscular fibre, as they are exhibited in the living phenomena of plants and animals, I shall proceed to notice, in a connected series, the leading offices and distinguishing characters of the most prominent links in the natural chain of Being, from the simple functions of plants to the complicated power and intelligence of man.

In plants we may observe the two natural *instincts*, if such they may be called, of nutrition and propagation; and the results of these are works of divine

* See the Preface to Herder's Outlines.

art, such as are scarcely equalled by the most exquisite performance of any insect: they are the bud and flower. Plants exist, therefore, to vegetate and bear fruit—a subordinate end, it may appear, yet the basis of every other in the creation. This end they accomplish to perfection; and it is scarcely necessary to remark, that it is attained the more completely, as they labour at it the more incessantly, and as the end or object is less divided. Plants may be multiplied by suckers, slips, and cuttings, as well as by seeds; and where they can, they exist in the whole germ—branch, leaf, and flower, being often included in it,—and protrude new shoots and buds, when not arrested by cold, with incessant powers of multiplication. And thus a single branch may represent the whole tree; for what the whole effects, each part or shoot is capable of effecting also. Plants imbibe food by the roots, the trunk, and the branches, and, in the opinion of some, also by the leaves and flowers. The plant is compensated for every thing it has been denied, by the intensity of the single power that operates in it. It neither requires the faculty of locomotion, nor the knowledge of other plants around it. But it attracts and enjoys after the manner of plants, heat, light, air, and the juices that nourish it: and the propensity to grow, to bloom, and to multiply its species, it exercises more truly and incessantly than any other creature.

The transition from plants to the *zoophytes*, or animal flowers, as they are sometimes called, shows

this more clearly. These seem to connect the animal with the vegetable life. Most of this order take root like the plant, as it were, and grow up into stems; multiplying life in their branches and deciduous buds, and in the transformation of their animated blossoms or polypes, which are endued with spontaneous motion. They possess therefore a degree of sensation and the organs of locomotion. In these the organs of nutrition are separated—not as in plants; but their principal organic powers are nutrition and propagation. But, like plants, the polypus puts forth shoots from its body, and not only so, but as a stimulated muscle displays more energy, so the polypus when divided into portions exerts all its powers to repair the loss; pushing forth limbs after limbs with astonishing powers of reproduction. Each section becomes an animal of the same kind. No division, however minute, can deprive the animal of life: even when inverted, as a man inverts the finger of a glove, the polypus begins to take food and to perform its natural functions. Different portions of one polypus were engrafted by Tremblay on another,—as of the head of one polypus on the body of another,—and in this way the most fantastic forms were produced.*

In the order *Testacea*, the Snail exhibits a somewhat higher range of obscure vital powers, developed only in a few members. It possesses fine tentacula

* See Linnæus, Herder, Smellie.

or feelers; some slight appearance of nerve; eyes of the most simple construction, at the extremities of its horns; an open mouth; something like a beating heart; and a wonderful power of reproduction. The animal renovates head, horns, and eyes. It not only forms its shell and again wears it away, but produces a living being with similar shells. Hence it is capable of effecting, in its low rank, what no other creature with more perfect limbs can perform; its living powers working more intensely, in proportion to the limited sphere in which it has to act.

If we rise to the *Insect*, we see an exquisite and artful structure accompanied with actions equally artful. Its nerves are delicately fine; and its muscles extremely minute. The muscles of a caterpillar amounting to nearly four thousand, while those of the human body are supposed not to exceed four hundred and fifty. They are generally defended without by a hard covering. Insects do not appear to have a regular circulation as in the larger animals. The muscular strength of insects is astonishing compared with their size. It is said that a flea will draw a chain one hundred times heavier than itself. The vast burden carried by a chafer, and the force exerted by an angry wasp, are proofs of this strength of muscle.

The head, eyes, antennæ, wings, &c. of insects, and their various works of art effected by their limbs and senses, all show a wonderful perfection of organic living powers operating in every part. But these

parts cannot be reproduced like inferior limbs in the creatures above noticed. The trembling avulsed leg of a spider or a fly, shows the force of vital irritability it retains, when separated from its trunk. This living power is distributed by nature throughout all the limbs even to the most minute. The antennæ or feelers, are senses; and the slender legs, muscles, and arms; each nervous plexus or ganglion, a smaller brain; and each irritable vessel, almost a beating heart: and thus all its delicate operations are accomplished; astonishing us by their perfection and exquisite art.

In cold-blooded animals, we see the same excess of irritability. The tortoise moves a long time without brain or even head. Redi opened the head of a tortoise, took out its brain and washed the cavity. Yet the animal walked away, as if it had sustained no injury, and it lived for six months, moving its limbs as in health: it necessarily became blind. Redi at last cut off the head, and the tortoise lived twenty-three days after its separation: the head, when removed, rattling the jaws for above a quarter of an hour like a pair of castanets.

If the jaws of a dead crocodile be pulled asunder, they are capable of biting off the incautious finger. The frog will live and jump several hours after its head has been cut off. It will continue active though all its bowels are taken out; and will live many days even if it be stripped of its skin. In some of its acts its limbs may be torn off before it will relinquish its

purpose. The teeth of a viper inflict a mortal wound three, eight, nay twelve days, after the head has been separated from the body. The less therefore the vital powers are under the controul of a nervous system and ample brain, the more active are they in the offices of supporting life, of repairing losses, and of reproducing parts of the system.

This must appear, when we take into account, that even in warm-blooded animals, their flesh moves more languidly in connexion with the nerves; and their intestines are more forcibly affected by stimuli when the animal is dead. How often do we see, when sentient life is retiring, that the body is convulsed with involuntary struggles, that are nothing more than the indications of muscular power impeded by nervous animal irritability, in which sensation and perception have no part! We know to a certainty that in the most violent of convulsive motions, as in epilepsy, there is no pain: yet the voluntary muscles are frightfully distorted. The epileptic, during the paroxysm, has no consciousness of suffering, and therefore no recollection of any when he has recovered from the fit. The power of reproducing parts is lost in the more perfect animals, as they are called, that is, as they ascend higher in the scale—for each is perfect in its kind: at certain ages scarcely can they restore a tooth, or heal a wound or a fracture: and animals which possess the reproductive faculty, are not able to renew those parts in which muscular powers are condensed, like those which are, as it

were, but sprouts: for instance, the lobster can push out new claws, but not a new tail; in which great part of its vigour lies.

The farther the muscular powers enter the sphere of the nerves, the more are they imprisoned, as it were, in this organization. The more numerous and delicate the nerves of an animal, the more they are allied to nobler parts and senses: and, on the contrary, in those animals, in which irritability overpowers perception, and the muscular powers the nervous system;—where the latter is employed on mean functions and appetites, especially hunger, the species, according to our own standard, is less perfect in structure, and more gross in its manners; while in those possessed of an ample brain, the sensations and perceptions are remarkably exalted—just as the clownish part of human nature is capable of being changed and refined into the gentleness and accomplishment of taste and sentiment.

These, then, are the facts—the obvious rules, by which it has pleased Divine Providence to connect life and motion with the phenomena of perception and thought; in various degrees in the ascending scale; and yet so mysteriously in every gradation, that we can in no case separate that which is *material* from the *immaterial*; nor determine how much is attributable to *mind* and how much to *matter*. But it is clear that every where, and in every species, an active and intelligent principle must be inferred. Without it the materialist must find himself be-

wildered. For as the bodies of brutes have their natural life and spring from the dust, so the body of man has analogous propensities, and may claim kindred with the worm, and with the earth out of which it was formed.

I may, indeed, be told, that the mechanism of the animal, in other words, its material structure, is sufficient to account for its operations; and that to introduce any thing of mind or an immaterial principle, operating in the lower animals, is to make them partakers of that immortal nature we conclude to be imparted only to man. But the latter consequence can with no good reason be drawn from it: because, upon this principle, every thing, in which traces of the divine finger are manifest, must be immortal also. Now, all nature bears these marks—and every hair of the head, every vessel, and every joint, is a miracle of divine workmanship. Every blade of grass, and every flake of snow,—the bird's feather and the fishes scale, have each their wonders. Yet these are not immortal. Nor does it appear that a spark of the divine, free, or self-acting nature, is communicated to any sublunary being but to Man.

It is quite impossible to separate the mechanism from the Art or Intelligence that designed, and the Power that formed. And however I may admit that the animal is capable by its own mechanism of producing those actions which are under its controul, I cannot with reason ascribe to its own power other actions going forward in its animal structure—actions

of vital necessity—of which, notwithstanding, it is wholly unconscious. Therefore, all its unconscious vital motions, together with the skill and perfection of its formation, must, by a necessary consequence, be referred to some *intelligent agent.*

But, if we believe that the earth, with all contained in it, was originally formed by an Almighty power—a position which very few, even professed materialists, deny;—we must also believe that the frame and constitution of nature are continued and sustained by the same power. Hence we must conclude that the divine energy pervades every part of the great system; every atom and every orb; the minute insect and the mighty whale; the invisible seed and the lofty oak. For, if we could imagine the divine superintendence to be withdrawn, even for a moment of time, anarchy and chaos would resume their ancient dominion. It is quite absurd and derogatory from the attributes of the Deity to suppose, as some do—and I state the argument with reverence—that the Supreme Being, having established laws, as they are pleased to say, by which all nature is governed, takes no farther trouble in the administration of these laws, but relinquishes his divine care, and reposes as a wearied mortal after his toil. This cannot be conceived of what is infinite in power. And the eye "that sleeps not by day, nor slumbers by night," represents an ever-watchful and bountiful Providence.

The materialist cannot show, notwithstanding this singular gradation in structure, movement, and action,

that we have observed in the scale of being up to man, how a single animated object in the creation regulates its own movements. The mechanism is not its own contrivance: and with this the unthinking animal has as little to do, as the infant with a knowledge of the structure and functions of its brain or heart.

There is a strict alliance, then, between man and every thing beneath him and around him;—an alliance in the elements of his body, in the mode of its production, of its nourishment, and its decay. He is dependent upon the grass of the field. He has appetites and passions like the reptile and the brute.

But, with all these powerful affinities that bind him to the earth, he has within him a principle that looks beyond the present world; that tells him all he sees and contemplates in this life relates only to the inferior propensities of his nature; and that convinces him he alone is the visible lord of the creation, for whom all these things were made; and consequently that *he* must be the connecting link between the visible and invisible worlds.

Consider the higher operations of the human mind. Calculate its wonderful capacities. Examine the range of its contemplations, and its conceptions of ideal happiness and perfection, even when unaided by revelation. Observe the good man in adversity,—his mind supporting itself with a godlike magnanimity:—And what relation have these sparks of a brighter flame—these indications of a noble and superior nature, to

the present constitution of things?—what congruity have these gleams of light that are now and then permitted to shine over us, with the darkness and changeableness, and reptile forms, that are here continually before our eyes!

Whatever the materialist may theoretically conclude, he cannot seriously persuade himself, that a little difference in form, or a nicer texture in the brain, constitutes all the difference between himself and the highest order of brutes.

Human imagination cannot conceive a being destined to fill the station occupied by man on this earth, with a different constitution of body from the present, to which numberless objections might not be readily advanced by any considerate mind. Of what elements, it might be asked, would the materialist have the human structure to be composed? If they were essentially different from those every where else observable in nature, there could be neither affinity nor harmony between them: and their growth, increase, and dissolution, would be quite inconceivable. If the elements were the same, the body must be subject to the same laws. But, if subject to the same laws, and other creatures inferior in the scale were also designed by infinite wisdom as necessary to complete the chain; and that these also should be subject to the same natural laws; their organization must needs have exhibited various lines of affinity and outward resemblance to that of man. Hence, the resemblance to the brute, in all that concerns the material structure of the

human frame, can be no reasonable argument in favour of materialism; nor the gradual ascent, from the living movements of a plant, through the several motions of zoophytes, molluscæ, insects, fishes, birds, and beasts, up to man, any argument of the human mind being composed of the same essence in its higher powers, with the inferior propensities of animated nature. And, in the whole chain of our reasoning, we have found it necessary to suppose an *active energy* operating in every particle of matter, organic and inorganic, according to its laws — an energy so efficient and intelligent as to entitle it to no other appellation than that of *divine*—to no lower origin than that of *omnipotence*.

CHAP. VII.

ON THE ZOOLOGICAL LECTURES OF WM. LAWRENCE, F.R.S.

It may not be irrelevant in this place to notice what different conclusions may be drawn from the same facts. Since most of the preceding observations have been written, I have had the curiosity to examine some of the reasonings of the respectable writer whose name is at the head of this Chapter: and a few remarks have occurred to me on reading a passage in his third Lecture, which seem to be intimately connected with this subject. The passage to which I refer so much resembles the view I have taken, that it would seem to have been written purposely for my argument.

This author had, just before, been endeavouring to prove, that "the same kind of facts, the same reasoning, the same sort of evidence altogether, which show digestion to be the function of the alimentary canal, motion (that) of the muscles, the various secretions of

their respective glands, prove that sensation, perception, memory, judgment, reasoning, thought, in a word, *all the manifestations called mental or intellectual, are the animal functions of their appropriate organic apparatus, the central organ of the nervous system:* i. e. the brain."

The author does not merely state the analogy of the two cases, or two classes of effects; which might, possibly, in a qualified sense at least, have been admitted; but he goes farther, and maintains that a *material organization* does actually produce the phenomena in question;—not only those of the bodily system, but the highest operations of mind.* We cannot read the following sentence without being convinced that the writer wholly identifies himself with the materialists. "The immaterialists will not concede the obvious corallary of all these admissions —that the mind of man is merely that more perfect exhibition of mental phenomena, which the more complete developement of the brain would lead us to expect, *and still perplex us with the gratuitous difficulty of their immaterial hypothesis.*"

The author discards *a vital principle.* He discards *an immaterial principle.* He also discards a *material but very subtle and invisible agent,* superadded to the obvious structure of the body, to enable it to exhibit vital phenomena:—each of which notions has been warmly maintained by others. I leave the reader to

* See 4th Lecture.

judge of the substitute he offers. "*The primary or elementary animal structures are endued with vital properties;* their combinations compose the animal organs, in which, by means of the vital properties of the component elementary structures, the animal functions are carried on. The state of the animal, in which the continuance of these processes is evidenced by obvious external signs, is called life." Again, he lays a charge against "those who think it impossible that the living organic structures should have vital properties without some extrinsic aid; that they require no such assistance for the equally wonderful affinities of chemistry, for gravity, elasticity, or the other properties of matter."* This I conclude to be a mistake; for, on the contrary, it will appear as necessary to suppose it in the latter cases as in those of life.

Now, I am persuaded that the author, in thus arguing for the possibility of matter refining itself or being refined into thought, and for its *unaided* efficiency for all the subordinate operations in which it is physically concerned, lays himself open to the charge of an assumption, or *petitio principii*, which, consistently with the acknowledgment he afterwards makes, and if he had followed strictly the rules of inductive reasoning, he could scarcely have been warranted in advancing.

The passage to which I first referred, with the

* See 3d Lecture.

acknowledgment contained in it, follows this question, "Shall I be told that thought is inconsistent with matter; that we cannot conceive how medullary substance can perceive, remember, judge, reason? I acknowledge that we are entirely ignorant how the parts of the brain accomplish these purposes—as we are how the liver secretes bile, how the muscles contract, or how any other living purpose is effected:—as we are how heavy bodies are attracted to the earth, how iron is drawn to the magnet, or how two salts decompose each other. Experience is in all these cases our sole, if not sufficient instructress; and the constant conjunction of phenomena, as exhibited in her lessons, is the sole ground for affirming a necessary connexion between them. If we go beyond this, and come to inquire the manner how, the mechanism by which these things are effected, we shall find every thing around us equally mysterious, equally incomprehensible:—from the stone, which falls to the earth, to the comet traversing the heavens:—from the thread attracted by amber or sealing-wax, to the revolutions of planets in their orbits:—from the formation of a maggot in putrid flesh, or a mite in cheese, to the production of a Newton or a Franklin."*

He acknowledges that "every thing is equally mysterious and equally incomprehensible." Yet, amidst all this darkness, he undertakes to clear up the difficulty by deciding that a peculiar conforma-

* See Lectures, &c. p. 105.

tion of matter produces all the phenomena in brute and intelligent natures, which we see in the world. He assumes, gratuitously enough, that matter alone, in an organized or inorganic state, executes all the purposes he has assigned to it. Yet he admits that "the manner how, and the mechanism"—in other words, if I may express it—the power and the wisdom —" are equally mysterious and equally incompresible."

I take for granted that he makes the assumption I have stated; because he seems to think that he has brought the arguments of his opponents to that state which is called by logicians a *reductio ad absurdum*, by compelling them to admit the following conclusion. That "if the intellectual phenomena of man require an immaterial principle superadded to the brain, we must equally concede it to those more rational animals, which exhibit manifestations differing from some of the human only in degree. If we grant it to these, we cannot refuse it to the next in order, and so on in succession to the whole series; to the oyster, the sea anemone, the polype, the microscopic animalcule. Is any one prepared to admit the existence of immaterial principles in all these cases? if not, he must equally reject it in man."

Now I do not perceive that there is any thing absurd in the supposition that an immaterial principle should operate or be at work in the creatures formed by the same principle. If the Deity has condescended to the workmanship, is it unreasonable that he should

guide the machine and superintend the movements? If we admit the existence of a Creator, we are called upon to admit the actions of those creatures, *which are not accountable, and therefore cannot resist his will*, as part of his works also. The divine energy operating in his works is no new idea in philosophy. Some of the wisest men have entertained the persuasion; because, without it, the skill and design manifest in the creation could not be explained. When a caterpillar moves its four thousand muscles in regular order, it knows nothing of the astonishing perfection of the mechanism: therefore it must obey a power superior to itself. But it does not follow, because we concede that an immaterial principle guides and directs all the objects in the creation, that it should therefore become a part of the constitution of those objects, and make them *divine* also—that it should, as it were, become united to them, as though it were one with their substance. This is no necessary consequence. It is in vain that we inquire how the divine power operates—mediately or immediately. This we can never know. But we may safely presume that it pervades every atom in the universe: and this has been the general opinion from Cicero and Virgil to Newton and Pope.

Magnetism and gravitation may show us that actual contact between masses of matter is not necessary to produce a simple physical effect. How much less should actual union be necessary between a divine immaterial spirit and a material form! Yet the pos-

sibility of the latter is not denied, though it is beyond our comprehension; nor is a divine influence questioned in regulating all physical events.

A stone cannot fall without it, nor a crystal shoot, a plant cannot vegetate, an animal move a limb, nor an intelligent being think and act. But we must distinguish between the power that communicates a faculty or endowment, and the absolute divinity and immateriality of the faculty;—for this reason, that in the present scheme of things, it has pleased Divine wisdom universally to connect these manifestations of his power both in nature and in man, with certain states of material conformation. Consequently, to assert that, *in this state*, the mental constitution of man is absolutely and independently immaterial, might be as unphilosophical as to assert that it was material. By natural research we come to something which cannot be explained by any laws of matter; and by natural research we prove an intimate and indissoluble connexion during life, between mental phenomena and cerebral configuration. This is what Lawrence expressly affirms, and what is freely granted to him. The exclusive inference which he draws, by implication, in ridiculing any immaterial agency, is objected to, on his own grounds.

That brutes and every thing else of an inferior nature, are guided, in the best manner, and to the best ends, which regard their being, is surely no argument against a divine interference. And the argument that as man does not himself follow that

which is best, therefore he cannot be under such an influence, is fallacious, and only proves that he does not submit himself and his actions to the same divine government; because he has been gifted with a power to withstand it:—But is no proof that he does not possess it.

There is no difficulty in conceiving—nor is it a strained hypothesis,—that in every creature God has made, *his power should continue to act*, at least in the mechanism composing it,—in every creature up to man. If this be the case, we cannot imagine the moving power to be material; because, it is divine. For, a divine principle composed of divisible particles is quite inconceivable.

But, in the case of man, we have the same law holding, in every act of his animal nature, that is not implicated in his free agency, as a rational and moral being. But there is superadded a portion of the divine nature immortal in its essence; and he has the power to resist or obey the Creator's will.

The Almighty has never, that we know of, made the brute animals accountable for their acts, or given them the power to contravene any divine statutes. He has appointed them an earthly ruler. He has not held out to them, as he has to the most destitute savage, the longing hope of immortality in a happier state of being. He has not given to them peace and joy—the present reward of good actions, and remorse and pain for evil conduct; because the knowledge of good and evil is withheld. Man, therefore, in all

these things, is essentially different from the brute; and may approach nearer to the likeness of his Maker, or recede farther from the divine image, by his own free choice.

Now, in this view, we neither make the brute a spiritual agent, nor the human mind a pure immaterial principle, in this its natural state. The former is, what it is, by necessity; incapable of moral improvement, because it has no knowledge but of the duty and allegiance it owes to man: the latter may degrade itself to mere animal affection, and become absorbed in sensuality, or may rise from these bonds and look abroad in unshackled and conscious dignity. But a mind, while it is still united with the body—still subject to the dominion of sense and appetite, and imprisoned, as it were, in an earthly tenement; which can loosen itself from this connexion, subdue its low desires, overcome its natural tendencies, and already anticipate by its virtues a better state; whatever the materialist may think, certainly proves its superiority to the elements that surround it; clearly demonstrates that it has no essential and indissoluble affinity with these elements, and discloses its real tendency towards a state of existence in which the opening bud of its virtues can alone blossom into perfect life.

For, if man be the only creature under heaven, as we cannot doubt he is, who feels he has the power to disobey his Maker's commandments, and to obtain his favour by obedience; this exclusive privilege must

assuredly have been granted for some high purpose, and it stamps him with the impression of peculiar estimation.—A power to resist Omnipotence, and to rise by free choice, or virtuous conformity to the divine counsels, into nearer union with the source of infinite perfection! what an inestimable privilege, and how greatly is it abused! He cannot surely conceive that the creatures appointed for his temporal use, whatever likeness they may bear him, can have any interest in that immortal state, to which his own hopes instinctively point; or that they hold any relation, like that springing up in his own mind, from new sympathies, affections, and desires, wholly unconnected with this world, to superior intelligences and kindred spirits, with whom his budding capacities are alone capable of enlargement.

Now, to return to the subject; the gradation in organized nature up to the human form, and the intimate connexion of an amply developed brain with the perfection of human intellect, and also between diseased cerebral structure and deranged mental power, are points freely admitted to the author of the Lectures, on the principles I have laid down. Indeed they are facts which it would be folly to deny. All that I wish, therefore, to maintain, is, that *that* which is "mysterious and incomprehensible," according to this writer, is the *divine energy of the Deity* operating in his own works. But whether it operates by the immediate agency of an immaterial principle, or some equally incomprehensible material structure,

quickened by his power—which perhaps may mean the same thing—does not appear to be of the least importance, either as it regards the agent or the object. For, I presume, it never can be demonstrated one way or the other; the essence of mind as well as of matter being unknown.

I wish however to be guarded in expression, that although we admit the divine energy acting in and throughout the creation, it does not follow that every act of the lower animals should be considered as a divine act, pure from materiality, and of free unfettered divinity. For the power is in every case modified by the structure: otherwise we should not perceive such a variety in the works of the same divine artist, some creatures endowed with more and some with fewer capacities and powers. And it seems to have been ordained that *that* which is superior should sometimes be imprisoned by that which is inferior—the divine by the earthly—the mind by the body—the good by the evil tendencies. Why this should be the case, is a question with which we have nothing at present to do.

With respect also to what is ordained as a law of nature or of the Deity, I apprehend it can mean nothing more than his power. Hence, if he acts according to certain laws, he acts by his power. For his laws cannot be independent of his power.

It was the error of Stahl and some other reasoners of his school, that the *rational* soul, as it was called, was said to superintend every operation in the body

as well as the mind. But the simplest view of the animal economy will convince us that those things, which are done *without* animal consciousness, cannot be referred to the same identical motive power, which acts in cases of free animal volition.

Our volition is no more immediately concerned in our own secretion, assimilation, nutrition, absorption, &c. than if these functions belonged to another being. Therefore our own rational soul (admitting the expression) can have nothing to do with these functions; for they belong to the brute equally with ourselves. But our mind can determine and act according to certain laws, and display certain phenomena purely its own, i. e. arising from its own capacities and powers: In like manner can the brute. Therefore, two principles are at work simultaneously in each. The one, divine and omniscient, superintending vital actions in their very elementary motions, entrusted neither to man nor to brute, because requiring nothing short of divine power to execute them: the other, limited in each, according to the measure granted by the Deity for certain specific ends, entrusted to the creature's own senses, appetites, and mental endowments, varying in every creature according to its organization, though derived originally from the same Almighty power.

Hence a portion of *voluntarity*, or spontaneity, or power of commencing voluntary motion, is given to animals, which they can exercise—not independently altogether of the divine will, but to a certain extent

as free agents in physical actions; just as the human mind has the power of free agency to a certain extent in moral actions.

It is clear, therefore, that there is a two-fold agency of mind in these cases:—a pure, unlimited, intelligent, regulating impulse, independent of the creature; and a limited, uncertain, irregular, inefficient power of volition, according to the degree of mental energy varied infinitely in different creatures, dependent on the physical structure of each, and quiescent or active as the creature may determine. In animals this power of volition is exceedingly limited, and confined to a few actions, mostly animal, in some few, intelligent, or perhaps intellectual. In man it has a wider range, and not only embraces the animal and rational acts in which some of the brutes seem to take a part, but his moral actions likewise.

Now I have considered it remarkable, that the author of the Lectures, after professing his total ignorance, does not at once suggest, in connexion with his reasoning, that the mysterious and incomprehensible acts manifested in nature might be legitimately referred to an all-wise, omnipresent Creator: In the course of his investigation, it is clear that he observed innumerable instances of the most perfect adaptation between structure and uses, and the most obvious connexion between means and ends, implying design and intelligence of the highest order. I believe that in strict philosophical propriety there are better grounds for supposing, that, beyond the im-

passable barrier which impedes human research, in all these matters, a wise and intelligent agent is at work, than the materialist can have for assuming that some incomprehensible condition of the elements or of the minute particles of matter, by their own self-moving energy, causes the phenomena. There is obviously more reason for the former hypothesis, because the existence of such an all-wise power in the creation may be collaterally inferred. But it is impossible to conceive that any configuration of the particles of matter, without some intelligent artist, operating in and upon them, can do any thing at all.

It is very clear that the author of the Lectures intrenches himself behind that maxim of the schools, which is good in its place, that insists upon nothing being taken for granted which is not first proved; and that he indulges a sort of self-complacency for having imagined nothing beyond the evidence of the dissecting knife. If we ask for an explanation of what is meant by "elementary animal structures, endued with vital properties,"—on which he makes the phenomena of animal life wholly to depend, I suspect we shall know nothing more than if they had been called, the *Atoms* of Epicurus, or the *Monads* of Leibnitz.

I put it to the plainest understanding to decide whether the notion of a supreme power, who formed the structure of an animal, still continuing to direct the functions of the animal made by his own art, is not more simple, intelligible, and consistent with

every thing around us, than that of "elementary animal structures, endued with vital properties," produced by we know not *what*,—governed by we know not *what*,—and supported we know not *how*.

It has appeared to me surprising, that a philosophic inquirer into the laws and order of nature, should content himself with having recourse to some inextricable dilemma—something dark and unknown; instead of that obvious reference to a supreme intelligence, which in its very principles constitutes the foundation of piety and religion, and has been the resort of true philosophy in all ages.

I do not wonder, as he has hinted, that an anatomist should think he sees no traces of a principle distinct from matter in the dissecting-room—in a loathsome body returning to the elements out of which it was formed. Nor ought we to be surprised, that any one, who has spent great part of his life in comparing the structure of one animated being with another, and each with its peculiar faculties, from those of locomotion and nutrition up to perception and thought, should see these things as a mere physiologist, and should take a less comprehensive view of the human mind and its diversified relations than others.

For, after all, the mind is the chief subject that concerns a moral and intelligent agent: and the anatomist will never be able to tell us more of its propensities by all his discoveries, than we already know; nor to find out in the brain a single new

faculty. We have this knowledge independently of his skill; and he is the last to whom a rational creature should apply for information touching an immaterial and immortal principle. So far as this can be discovered by the knife, or by physiological research, *he is the last*:—though anatomy, of all pursuits, abounds with lessons of wisdom, from innumerable examples of contrivance, skill, and exquisite workmanship.

If, as the author confesses, and every candid mind must allow, "the sublime dogmas"—comprehending "the theological doctrine of the soul, and its separate existence"—"could never have been brought to light by the labours of the anatomist and physiologist"—"and rest on a species of proof altogether different;" and that "an immaterial and spiritual being could not have been discovered amid the blood and filth of the dissecting-room:" conversely, it appears to me obvious, that it is highly unreasonable, if not presumptuous, for the anatomist to employ his discoveries, or the geologist his researches, so as to arrange a system of argument to overturn *that proof*, by invalidating the truth of those sacred records, which form the venerable basis on which alone the "sublime dogmas" in question are built. For, notwithstanding the author seems to draw his proof from what he calls the universal belief of mankind "for ages and ages before the period to which our remotest annals extend," independent, too, of Scripture testimony; yet I cannot perceive any other legitimate source

of outward proof for these "great truths" than the sacred writings.

The author distinctly asserts, that "the instances of America, New Holland, and some other islands, afford unanswerable arguments against the creation of all animals in one spot."

And again, "To the grounds of doubt respecting inspiration, which arise from examination of the various narratives, from knowledge of the original and other oriental languages, and from the irreconcileable opposition between the passions and sentiments ascribed to the Deity by Moses, and that religion of peace and love unfolded by the Evangelists, I have only to add, that the representations of all the animals being brought before Adam in the first instance, and subsequently of their being all collected in the Ark, if we are to understand them as applied to the living inhabitants of the whole world, are *zoologically* impossible." (Sect. 2. Chap. 1.)

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that if these strong assertions could in any degree shake the authenticity of the Hebrew Scriptures, they must immediately tend to destroy that species of proof on which the sublime dogmas alluded to must ultimately rest for their support. The Hebrew Scriptures look forward with clear predictions to the time of the Evangelists: and the promulgator of the gospel himself looks back to these sacred records, points out their completion, and sanctions their truth. Hence,

to vindicate the truths of the gospel, and at the same time to question the divine authority of Moses and the Prophets, are incompatible labours. If the writings of the latter be not received as genuine in themselves, I know not where we shall find the proof of those sublime dogmas, which is admitted to exist. Jesus Christ, by fulfilling the laws and ordinances of Moses, confirmed their divine obligations upon all the descendants of Abraham till his time: in short, by fulfilling the law he set his seal to the divine commission of Moses who was its author. And therefore a contrast of the two dispensations, with invidious and disparaging reflexions upon the first, must inevitably weaken the foundations of credibility in the last.

In concluding my remarks on the work under review, I am, however, anxious to do the author justice. Although I cannot find the reference to an Almighty Power, in *immediate* connexion with his reasoning on the movements of animal life; yet I am gratified in being able to produce an incidental allusion to such a Divine principle, in the Second Lecture. He observes, "The ends or final purposes of the Creator will be placed in the strongest light, by selecting any animal of marked peculiarity in its economy, and comparing together its structure and mode of life."—I gladly quote also a passage, to be found in one of the Introductory Lectures, published about three years before the principal work made its appearance. It is to the following effect.—"The

Power of Reproduction"—"forms one of those decisive and grand characters, which distinguish at once the machines, that proceed from the hand of the Creator, from all, even the most ingenious and boasted productions of human skill."

CHAP. VIII.

RECAPITULATION—THE PERFECTION OF INSTINCT IN ITS PHYSICAL OPERATIONS, AND THE IMPERFECTION OF HUMAN REASON.

SECT. I.

Recapitulation.

HAVING now considered those instinctive motions in organized matter, which indicate the operation of a moving power, called Mind, vitally inherent in every animated structure, and acting very frequently without the creature's direction,—whether it may act according to chemical or mechanical laws, or may obey a finer impulse peculiar to living organs;—I shall recapitulate very briefly the chief heads of which we have been treating, before I proceed to apply the foregoing reasonings in connexion with the subject more immediately proposed in this Essay—viz. the relation which Instinct, in all its different modifications, bears to the highest acts of the human mind.

We have seen, and must be assured, that in every particle of dust, there are properties entirely incomprehensible; and that in the fall of a stone and the shooting of a crystal, a blind but infallible impulse operates; which, from ignorance of the cause, we are used to term a Law of Nature. For, though this impulse be blind, as it regards the substance, yet it is wise and unerring, as it regards the Creator; and because it acts with uniform energy—in a manner too inscrutable to human reason,—we refer it to a power impressed by the Deity. For, if the law, by which a stone falls to the ground, be the same with that by which the heavenly bodies are moved in their orbits, how wonderful must be its operation, how far transcending human knowledge, and how worthy of the divine architect.*

If we notice the elements by which we are surrounded, how perfect are they in their respective natures;—the air, water, fire!—how essential in every vital operation to every thing that grows and breathes, yet how powerful when suffered even to exert their limited force in the earth:—as witness the hurricane's fury, the raging sea, the far-extended devastation of the earthquake, the overwhelming eruption of the

* "Gravity (says Woodward) does not proceed from the efficiency of any contingent and unstable agents; *being entirely owing to the direct concourse of the power of the Author of Nature.*"

"True philosophy has shewn it (gravity) to be unsolveable by any hypothesis, *and resolved it into the immediate will of the Creator.*—(Quincey.)

"Universal gravitation (says Bentley) is above all mechanism: *and proceeds from a divine energy and impression.*"

volcano, and the awfully swift destruction of lightning! With such amazing capabilities of reducing the earth to its original chaos, how admirably are these potent elements restrained and regulated; and, with what transcendent skill, are they adapted to the form and habitudes and senses of animals!

Rising from gravitation and the laws of the more subtile though unconscious elements, to crystallization and chemical attraction; in the solid parts of our globe, what infinite wonders!—If the ultimate particles of matter be the same in all bodies, how marvellously and in what inexhaustible variety are they formed into metals, gems, earths, salts, and their innumerable compounds;—each precious stone, and each salt, earthy or metallic, affecting its own crystal by an inherent tendency altogether inscrutable!

But, if from the rude crust of the earth, the inorganic stone, we ascend a single step towards the animal kingdom, we see the plant springing upward from its seed, and bearing fruit, with inherent powers which defy all explanation by chemical or mechanical laws. The structure is so delicate, the growth and nutrition so elaborate, that the utmost effort of human skill cannot form a fibre of the simplest leaf, or compound the juice of the meanest herb. And therefore, we seem justified in ascribing the phenomena of the vegetable kingdom, so perfect, so diversified, so adapted to their ends,—the continuance of the several species, the delight and support of animated nature, and the beauty and harmony of the creation—to a

vivifying principle, whose internal working is inexplicable, and can only be referred to an all-wise efficient Power.

But leaving plants, if we follow up the chain of organized matter, from the polypus, the snail, and the oyster, to the most perfect animal structure; whether we contemplate the living forms adapted to the air, the water, or the earth—as the zoophyte, the reptile, the insect, the fish, the amphibia, the bird, or the beast; we see them all exquisitely fashioned, and perfect in their kinds.

We see that the arts, by which the several tribes are preserved, and the species perpetuated, are varied in so many thousand ways, that it is nearly demonstrable, nothing but a Supreme and infinitely wise Ruler, could have so diversified their forms, and adapted their structure so wonderfully to their different instincts. For, whether they are endowed with more or less sagacity, it is plain, that every one answers the design of its creation as completely, though in its limited sphere, as the Sun, the Moon, or any of the planetary orbs.

There is a remarkable coincidence in the ideas contained in the following passages from Virgil and Pope, which is too obviously connected with the preceding reasonings, to require further comment.

" All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That changed thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the Earth, as in the etherial frame;
Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect in a hair as heart—
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt Seraph, that adores and burns".....

" Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to choose their food?
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
Who made the spider parallels design
Sure as Demoivre, without rule or line?
Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore
Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before?
Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?
GOD, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds."

Pope's Essay on Man.

It is necessary to premise that Virgil had some leaning to the Pythagorean doctrine of Metempsychosis.

"Know first, that heav'n and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry flame,
And both the radiant lights, *one common soul*
Inspires and feeds—and animates the whole.
This active mind, infus'd through all the space,
Unites and mingles with the mighty mass.
Hence men and beasts the breath of life obtain,
And birds of air, and monsters of the main;
The etherial vigour is in all the same;
And every soul is filled with equal flame—
As much as earthy limbs and gross allay
Of mortal members subject to decay,
Blunt not the beams of heav'n and edge of day.
From this coarse mixture of terrestrial parts,
Desire and fear by turns possess their hearts,
And grief and joy; *nor can the groveling mind*
In the dark dungeon of the limbs confined,
Assert the native skies, or own its heavenly kind."

Dryden's Virgil.

Justin Martyr gives the following summary of the opinion of Pythagoras: viz. "God is one; he is not as some conjecture, exterior to the world, but in himself entire, pervades the universal sphere, superintends all productions, is the support of all nature, eternal, the source of all power, the first simple principle of all things, the origin of celestial light, the father of all, the mind and animating principle of the universe, the first mover of all the spheres."*

* See Aikin's General Biography—Justin Martyr.

Sect. II.

Perfection of Instinct in its operations.

It seems evidently to be the design of nature, that not only the vegetable kingdom, but the different tribes of the animal, should be subservient to the uses of man; for whom we may legitimately presume they were created, because we see no other animal superior to ourselves. We find therefore that the preservation and perpetuation of the several species have been guarded and secured by an Intelligence more vigilant and active, and more perfect than the most enlightened human reason. And this Intelligence, operating in the brutes from the highest to the lowest, for these special purposes, we have been accustomed to designate by the term of *Instinct*. But from every thing we can discern, it does not appear, that brutes themselves in accomplishing those purposes for which they were obviously designed, have any rational notions of the end of their own works. It simply appears, that by the direction of this powerful principle, in obedience to certain modes of structure and bodily sensations prompting them to act, they pursue, blindly and without foresight, those ends or operations, on which, as far as they are individually concerned, the integrity of the whole scheme of nature and its

durability depend. It is obvious, that to harmonize and order aright so many thousand created things; varying infinitely in structure, in habits, and propensities; interfering too continually in their several objects and mutual wants; supporting and destroying one another; nothing short of the most comprehensive and exalted Intelligence would be required. We have, therefore, the evidence of wisdom in each, as well as in the whole;—in the individual fibre and the entire animal;—in each animal separately, and in its relations to every thing around it,—to the complete circle of animated beings.

What I aim, therefore, to impress, is this, that every thing which regards the administration of the physical government of the world, the Deity has reserved to his own keeping: so that whatever is of supreme importance to the general good; whether in the unconscious elements, the vegetating plant, the moving reptile, or the living animal; whether in the highest order of thinking brutes, or even in the physical economy of man himself; is under the immediate controul and superintendence of Divine Wisdom, and not of human Reason.

Where Reason, therefore, would be a feeble and uncertain guide, sometimes ready for service, and sometimes slumbering at its post, Instinct is ever found to be a prompt minister, faithful to its trust.

Say, where full Instinct is the unerring guide,
What Pope or council can they need beside?
Reason, however able, cool at best,
Cares not for service, or but serves when prest.
Stays till we call, and then not often near,
But honest Instinct comes a volunteer.
This too serves always, Reason never long;
One must go right, the other may go wrong.

But if the brute is thus directed by a wise and unerring principle, in fulfilling the design of its creation—a principle which we can only regard as an emanation of Divine wisdom; are we to consider that the better part of man is left to a secondary and inferior guidance—the faint and fluctuating reflected light of Reason?—That man, the noblest of sublunary existences, created for the purpose of his Maker's glory, can be conducted by this light to the complete summit and full attainment of the objects of his Being?

I take it for granted that the main and ultimate objects of his being are not like those which concern the brute:—neither the mere provision for the body, nor yet provident care for his offspring;—but essentially different, and rising far above animal sense. I take it for granted that neither the rational enjoyments of life, nor the rational pursuits of science, can, in themselves, prepare and fit the human mind for an immortal union with its Maker.

We have already partially considered the chief ends and subordinate uses of the lower animals in the

creation, and how these are accomplished—viz. by pure Instinct. It would be a grave and elaborate inquiry to consider the chief ends of the creation of man himself; and how these are to be accomplished: —viz. by what lights, intuitions, and notices from his Maker, and through what means, he is best instructed in his moral duties.

I may neither be qualified for such an arduous undertaking, nor may this be a suitable occasion to enter upon it. But as a subject of natural investigation, it is certain, that it has been liable to much difference of opinion.

The question is simply, whether it be the faculty of Reason, as it is above defined, that can elevate Man to the perfection of his Being; or *a divine emanation*, somewhat analogous to that in brutes, by which he is enabled to follow the path of undeviating rectitude, and to claim reverential affinity to his Maker.

It is necessary to be understood, that "we are now discoursing," as Sir Matthew Hale expressed himself on a similar occasion, "in the outward court of the Gentiles." We are not availing ourselves of those helps which Revelation offers to us; because, in a natural inquiry, those who rest on outward notices, are apt to slight supernatural manifestations, through whatever medium they may be offered.

Considering the analogy of Reason's incompetence in the physical relations that have come under our notice, we should be led to infer *a priori* that Reason

is not the principle to which the high moral offices in question are intrusted.

If, in the physical economy of man, many animal functions, necessary to his outward existence and temporary welfare, must be exercised, without his controul if not his cognizance; if, in all these instances Reason would be a weak and imperfect guide; is it credible that so erring a faculty would be intrusted with those dignified operations of the mind which appertain to its immortal interests; or that Reason could effect *that* for the *most* noble principle in man—his soul or spiritual essence, which it is incapable of effecting for the *least* noble part—his bodily frame?

We see, that although man has been constituted lord of the creation, and the lower animals have been appointed for his use; though he has been endowed with reason as a noble faculty by which he is enabled to exercise dominion over them; yet the government of their instincts is taken away from their delegated ruler—clearly, because Reason is incompetent to the task.

Therefore, in all that concerns the natural offices of Instinct, it must be considered a more sure and infallible guide than Reason; and consequently a more direct sign of the immediate working of the Deity. But, withal, the lower animals, however perfect, are not brought a step nearer to the God of Nature by their Instincts, than the plant or the stone; though, in all that concerns the part they have to act in the

grand scheme of Providence, their mode of action must be held to be conformable to the divine will. But this admission, on the one hand, does not elevate them above man, because Instinct is a better, what if we say, a more divine guide than Reason; nor, on the other, does it make the more perfect animals machines, because they are directed to ends which they do not see.

Sect. III.

Imperfection of Reason.

It has been justly considered, that man differs essentially from the lower animals, not merely in degree, as one species differs from another, but in kind. It has however been added, that the distinguishing feature is the faculty of Reason. Accordingly Reason is set forth as the ennobling characteristic of man; and Instinct as the *degrading* attribute of the brute.

Now it cannot be doubted that both are gifts eminently useful, each necessary in its place, and wisely allotted by the Creator; and that a talent bestowed for cultivation, which may be improved by the creature's own care and assiduity, and thus rendered capable of important blessings to society, is highly to be appreciated. Such is the faculty of Reason. But

it neither appears that Reason, in itself, forms the only ground of distinction between the brute and human species; nor yet that the natural light derived from outward experience and observation, in other words, that the *Discursive Faculty*, by all its acquirements, can raise the mind to that degree of excellence in which it becomes, as it were, an *instinctive worker* of the divine will. And this, we must surely consider to be the perfection of our being; provided it be granted that we owe the Universal Parent *unquestioning* filial obedience.

If every thing around us, from the least to the greatest, animate and inanimate, acts in conformity to the counsels of the Almighty,—a fact we cannot for a moment doubt—why should not the most perfect specimen of God's workmanship, his creature man? And why should Reason belie its assumed dignity, in falling short of those performances, which inferior natures readily execute? The fault must be in Reason, or else Reason is not the faculty to which the most excellent operations of the human soul are intrusted. For, if Reason be the faculty, on which so much depends, its inferiority, compared with the infallible direction vouchsafed to the brute, is at once apparent. But, abstractly, we cannot conceive that an inferior principle would be given to man for superior ends and purposes: and, therefore, because man, so far as he is governed solely by a reasoning faculty; so far, I mean, as he is beyond the sphere of Instinct, does not, in the majority of cases—scarcely

perhaps once in a thousand instances—attain to the perfection of which his nature is susceptible; it must be pronounced, that Reason is not the faculty to whose influence and operations, the highest degree of *moral excellence* is wholly to be ascribed.

I apprehend, it will be granted, that brute animals fulfil the ends of their creation; and am not aware that the proposition, in a moral sense, can be denied, that man *does not fulfil* the ends of his creation. For if he did, we should see purity of conduct instead of vice and wickedness overspreading the world.

But brute animals are governed by Instinct or the superior guidance of Providence: and man, in the usual course of affairs at least, is governed by Reason, that is, his own discretion. I state the proposition generally; which is the only way it can be taken.

Therefore, in fair deduction, Reason does not enable man to fulfil the ends of his creation; and his own discretion, however competent to his outward affairs, sleeps, or is overpowered, so far as his better, that is, his immortal interests are concerned. For, if Reason enabled man to fulfil the ends of his creation; this governing principle of human nature might be expected to produce effects as universal as the instinct of brutes.

The argument avails little which some may oppose, that Reason is not suffered to have the mastery, because other principles, antagonists to good, are superior in strength: and, hence, that the fault is not to be laid to Reason. Suffice it to say, that whatever

is boasted of as a special endowment, constituting the pride and glory of a creature, *ought* to have dominion; nay more, it would be doing injustice to Providence to suppose that it *might* not have dominion: and if Reason could accomplish all that is ascribed to it, I believe, it *would* have the dominion.

CHAP. IX.

OF REASON, AND THE EXTREMES OF OPINION RESPECTING IT—ITS EXTENT OR USES, AND LIMITATION OR INSUFFICIENCY.

SECT. I.

Of Reason, and the extremes of opinion respecting it.

REASON is a term, as I before remarked, comprehensive in its meaning; and when we consider it as including the whole rational and moral powers which distinguish man from the brute, it takes in more than can strictly be allowed.* It may be proper, therefore, to show, not only, positively, what Reason, in its fair legitimate acceptation, *can* do; but negatively, what it can *not* do. In this way we shall have a more distinct notion, both of its value and its insufficiency,—in other words, of its extent and its limitation.

It is a fact to be lamented, that some assertors of its dignity or usefulness, have given it all power and

* "Man is more distinguished by devotion than by reason, as several brute creatures discover something like reason, though they betray not any thing that bears the least affinity to devotion."
Addison.

supremacy in the human mind; and, on the contrary, some assertors of its insufficiency have spoken of the necessity of putting out its light, in order that a better might be substituted in its place.

Now, it is clear, that both these extremes may lead to error. We cannot consistently imagine that it is possible for Reason to inform us, what is done in Heaven; nor that a divine principle, governing our eternal interests, should supersede our temporal faculties and wants on earth.

If Reason, therefore, cannot do all that its professed advocates would have it do, let us not underrate its powers, and overlook its real uses: if it can do more than the apostles of a wild fanaticism and bigotry will admit, we must not bring down, as from its holy seat in the temple of the heart, into every secular act appointed to reason and sense, a superior principle designed for the highest spiritual offices of an immortal soul.

To favour the one class, we must not exalt too high the faculty of reason, by deprecating the necessity and ridiculing the supposition of superior help to so frail a being as man: nor must we depress it too low, by claiming the immediate guardianship of Heaven,—the pointings of the divine finger, in every step we are to take in the daily walks of life. How needful it is that the golden mean should be preserved! Whoever presumes that he may direct his own steps, and that he has no need of Providence for his guide, is in danger of the precipice that lies in the way of high-

minded arrogance and short-sighted practical impiety: whoever closes his outward senses when he may perceive, and refuses to exercise the rational powers his Maker has given him, when he may understand, (in expectation that, in this passive state, miracles will be wrought for his deliverance) like one wilfully blindfolded, may also fall into the snare of temptation. For he also presumes on the other side, tempting Providence and resting on divine protection, whilst he is neglecting earthly concerns, as if already translated to Heaven.

Let the errors of the one preserve us from a wayward enthusiasm, in which reason is taken captive in wild delusions; and the errors of the other equally guard us from the dark counsels which lead to the desolating abyss of scepticism. There surely is a mean—a safe and middle path. And, because human nature is liable to the first error, let us not therefore slide into the second; nor, because we are liable to the second, let us too rashly conclude, that man is left wholly to himself, and suppose that an instinctive, unflattering, superior, and supernatural Guide, leading into paths of moderation and sound discretion, is nothing but a chimæra of the brain, the offspring of bewildered fancies, and, never, in this day of reason's boasted ascendancy, vouchsafed to the human mind.

Sect. II.

Uses of Reason.

Let us now proceed to follow up the inquiry respecting the immediate uses to which reason exclusively is subservient.

And I may premise that we may place it at the head of all those intellectual powers that take cognizance of outward events, and suppose their co-operation, as perception, attention, memory, association,* &c. We may lawfully admit that by this noble faculty, which, according to the exercise we give it, determines our several stations, not to say our destiny in life, and fixes our allotments, as it were, for ourselves, man is enabled to treasure up knowledge of the past and to profit by the lights of experience. It enables him, by art and skill, to combine means with wonderful precision, for the attainment of certain ends; to provide with sagacious foresight for the

* ——— "For know that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties that serve
Reason as chief. Among these, Fancy next
Her office holds. Of all external things,
Which the five watchful Senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes;
Which Reason joining or disjoining, forms
All what we affirm, or what deny,
And call our knowledge or opinion.

Milton.

future by observation of the past; and to adapt his conduct to climate and season, and to endless changes in his outward situation. It enables him to subject even the elements to his use,—fire, air, water, minerals, and metals; to discover their properties and various relations; and even to ascertain with mathematical certainty the laws and complicated movements of some of the heavenly bodies. By Reason also he tames the natural fierceness of brutes, and makes them obedient to his service.

Moreover, by the native strength and unassisted light of Reason, man may be enabled to discover the rules of a wise and consistent conduct; because experience proves that immorality entails misery and disgrace both to individuals and to society; and nothing is more certain than that the devoted slave of appetite and passion is degraded below the brute. Reason, unquestionably, must be considered that instrument of the understanding, without which the knowledge of external relations could never be obtained, except by inspiration. For, though the outward senses might discover the qualities of things as they do to brute animals; and though they are necessary ministers to reason; yet the latter alone can search into, and compare; trace analogies, and arrange; observe the consequences of actions; and deduce the laws and principles of events. Hence it must be considered the founder and builder of human knowledge. For, no other power can lay the materials in order, select, and fit them in their places,

and raise the superstructure. This is the master-work—the peculiar office of Reason: and it bears the same relation to the subordinate faculties, that the architect of a building does to the labourer and mason.

Sect. III.

Limitation of Reason.

Now, after all the discursive range we have given to Reason, it does not seem in any way to follow from its functions or its capacity, that although it should make the circuit of natural knowledge it could approach a single step nearer to the knowledge of nature's God. For, natural knowledge, or philosophy so called, can amount to nothing more, after all its pretensions, than to a mere speculative knowledge of the manifest qualities of bodies and the laws of their mutual relations. It cannot reach to *the hidden power* which gives energy, life, and motion.

Therefore a knowledge of the Deity, or more properly of his attributes, obtained through the medium of outward things, that is, of his works, would, to man, be as obscure, distant, and imperfect, as the knowledge of the Sun ascertained in no better way than by its reflexion upon the Moon: it is only as it shines *immediately* upon the eye of the beholder,

that he can form the least conception of its majesty. And, in like manner, it is only as the ray of divine light is emitted from the fountain itself upon the mind, that any human being, so favoured, can form an adequate notion, however faint and imperfect, of its transcendent glory. It is *in the mind of man*, therefore, that the only true knowledge of the Creator can be discovered. Because, *without*, all is *mediate*, like sounds to the deaf, or colours to the blind. We cannot discover an obvious connexion between outward knowledge and inward feeling. The cold and heartless acknowledgment of a Creator, may be made perhaps by reason, when in physical inquiries, it is driven to an ultimate first cause. But the knowledge of his works does not necessarily tend to produce the warm internal evidence of his love and power. How much so ever Reason can *know*, it has no pretension to *feeling*. By reasoning, no human being can tell that a benevolent Creator regards him with the smiles of his favour; nor can outward observation ever discover that the soul of man has a near affinity with the supreme ruler of the world. The hearing of the ear cannot make the heart glow with love and gratitude. Nor can he, who sets himself inquisitively to examine the outward proofs of the existence of a Deity,—who questions them one by one, and resolves to admit no other evidence, expect to meet that approving welcome,—that love and sympathy, and sunshine of the heart, which it might be supposed an illustrious parent would give

his child anxiously seeking his acquaintance, to whom he was unknown.

It is not, surely, by standing aloof, and distrusting every outward sign, that an individual whose highest interest it is to cultivate an acquaintance with some distinguished relative, warmly disposed to do him service, can gain his favour. Yet this is the predicament in which the advocates of Reason's sufficiency, excluding a divine intelligence, would place the human mind in relation to its author. They would make a wider barrier between man and his Creator, than is known to subsist between the natural parent and his child. But is any one prepared to say that there is a closer affinity in the latter case than in the former? We all stand in the relation of children to one Almighty Parent: we all owe him love and obedience, and depend upon his care. Now in what manner does the natural parent proceed with regard to his son?—He instils into his mind the principles of knowledge; he watches the opening of his understanding; he caresses him with fondness, cheers him with encouragement, approves with smiles of favour, and punishes with looks of disapprobation. He requires of him, in return, docility, perfect obedience, unremitting watchfulness, and humility. But, according to the doctrine in question, the benevolent Father of all, who himself formed the soul, after having endowed it with Reason, resigned the government to this faculty, making it his sole vicegerent. Consequently the natural energies of the creature are sup-

posed to do all, and held to be sufficient for every moral and physical want; and the decision of Reason is paramount to that of every other intelligence! There is, therefore, upon this principle, no immediate intercourse between God and the soul of man; and smiles and frowns, irradiations, monitions, and other testimonies of divine notice are withheld. For, Reason, by its very constitution, jealously maintains its authority against every thing that has the appearance of enthusiasm—against every intrusion of thought and impulse that does not come by outward observation of the senses. Reason, it must be confessed, if these are its prerogatives, and it thus stands us instead of a Divine Intelligence, is a highly invested leader; and we should expect to see adequate fruits of so distinguished a guide—the fruits of order, consistency, rectitude, and harmony, in the moral relations of man!

Now, it is fair to ask, are all things under the government of Reason conducted with such a wise and consistent economy?

We see that every thing under the guidance of Instinct in the natural world, is maintained and regulated with consummate wisdom:—There is no want of harmony,—no disorder. But, in the moral world, so far as it is under the jurisdiction of reason, it is plain, that human affairs are not administered according to the rules of peace and harmony and wisdom. In the closets of the learned, we find what *ought to be* the state of human society: in support, too, of

these wise political and moral maxims, the universal concurrence of mankind is amply afforded. But, in the practical concerns of life, it too often happens, that both he, who propounds the truth, and he who adds his assent, transgress the principles of justice. In communities, great and small, we perceive the prevalence of evil; unworthy motives; fierce antagonist passions; dishonourable conduct; mean subterfuges; unmanly compliances; hostile contentions; and destructive wars. We perceive, that whole nations are sometimes actuated by a wild, irrational impulse;—rulers and their people hurried away by infuriated zeal; as if reason not only suffered the most brutal passions to riot in extravagance of disorder, but with all its energies, fanned the flame, and urged the ebullition.

Men speak of the gradual amelioration of society, as if it were produced by reason; and as if the discoveries in art and science would be infinitely progressive, and so *by themselves* work an important change in human affairs. But it appears to me extremely doubtful, whether the general comforts of society are greater now, than they were 3000 years ago. Though we travel more expeditiously on land, or navigate the sea with more certainty, or have improved machinery, compared with past ages; there is no necessary connexion between any of these things and moral advancement, or outward happiness. And though knowledge is infinitely preferable to ignorance, and a step towards moral cultivation, yet it is

questionable whether the reliance *upon reason only* has not kept back the human race in a state little superior, as to the aggregate of good, to what it was centuries ago. Take men, as they submit themselves wholly to this guidance, I mean, to outward observations, customs, and maxims, in different nations and among different sects; and their moral conduct indicates nearly the same general results. The turbulent principles of human nature are uppermost, unless restrained by the strong arm of law; and civil society among Jews and Mahometans, Pagans and Christians, saving superstitions and idolatry, exhibits one uniform aspect of moral deformity, over the world.

We do not state the proposition, as though moral disorder necessarily sprung from the reasoning principle. We simply state, that man, *by excellence*, a rational being, too often degrades himself below the brute, which is the creature of Instinct; and that consequently, the empire of human Reason is a scene of confusion and disorder compared with the empire of brute Instinct. For if it be objected that the moral disorder, to which I have alluded, is not attributable to Reason, but to the unruly passions of men: what is this but the admission of Reason's incompetency to controul these bad passions, and to keep them in good government?

We must perceive, therefore, without any laboured inference, that man, in a general way, does not fully answer the ends of his creation; unless indeed, we make these ends to consist in a few outward secular

pursuits; by which he must be degraded to the rank of the meanest insect, and assigned no other office than that of coming into the world, and for a little space breathing the vital air, that he may leave a succession behind him.

We might presume, without having recourse to revelation, that a being for whom so comely a world was evidently designed, graced as it is with so much to delight and instruct, was not sent into it, merely by his art and skill to supply his temporal wants, to bring other creatures into subjection, and like these to live and die, having provided a succession. For, it is clear, that if he were only intended for the limited duration of this life, he stood no more in need of a knowledge of his Maker, than the animals over which he ruled.

I say, then, we might presume, that man, alone gifted with a knowledge of his Maker, alone accountable for his actions, alone capable of gratitude and devotion and adoration, and alone susceptible of the influence of divine love, should possess a principle by which impressions like these might be appreciated and felt, congenial to its nature, as light is congenial to the eye, sweets to the taste, sounds to the ear, and speculative truth to the understanding.—We might presume, that he should possess a higher principle than Reason, than that faculty with which he is qualified to manage his outward affairs, to compare his rank in the creation, to adapt his conduct to emergencies, and to understand the nature and obli-

gation of human laws;—in a word, that he should have a better guide than fluctuating, weak and fallible reason. It would be natural to conclude that he should possess a principle infallible and unerring like the brute, analogous to instinct, but accompanied with a consciousness of the Giver; by the cultivation of which, and of which alone, the true object of his creation, the heartfelt, not the speculative, knowledge of God and of his will might be obtained. For, it is manifest, that, if this were not the case, with all his other advantages, man would be circumstanced unequally with the lower animals. These, it is clear, have an infallible direction. But where is the infallible Guide that leads man himself, the most perfect of all, in the path most acceptable to his Maker? Is Reason that faithful counseller and unerring rule by which he can direct his steps to the object that most concerns him in this life?

Instead of pursuing the train of my own reflections in answer to this question, I feel satisfaction in quoting the words of Dr. Gregory, who had no particular bias to the views I am adopting.

"In considering the effects (says he) which the faculty of Reason, that boasted characteristic and privilege of the human species, produces among those who possess it in the most eminent degree; and from the little influence it seems to have in promoting either public or private good, we are almost tempted to suspect, that Providence deprives us of those fruits we naturally expect from it, in order to

preserve a certain balance and equality among mankind."*

Indeed, it is difficult to conceive, how the most assiduous cultivation of Reason, and the most zealous co-operation with its feeble and fluctuating light, can lead the mind to any knowledge of supernatural truths, or to any union or harmony with the source of infinite purity. As the light of the Sun will dull and extinguish artificial flame, so it would appear to be consistent with the nature of things, in other words, with the divine economy, that the light of heaven, before it can have the complete ascendancy, should dim and overpower natural reason, especially where the latter opposes its entrance into the mind, at least in all the moral or spiritual relations of man.

For after all that Reason can do, and all it can know, still the mysteries of the invisible world are far beyond its reach. When Reason in former times attempted to speculate on these things, what vanity and folly marked its delusions! The words of Cowper are very apposite to this point:—

"All truth is from the sempiternal source,
Of light divine. But Egypt, Greece, and Rome,
Drew from the stream below. More favoured we
Drink, when we choose it, at the fountain head.
To them it flowed much mingled and defiled
With hurtful error, prejudice and dreams
Illusive of Philosophy, so called,
But falsely. Sages after sages strove

* See Comparative View,

In vain to filter off a crystal draught
Pure from the lees, which often more enhanced
The thirst that slak'd it, and not seldom bred
Intoxication and delirium wild.
In vain they pushed inquiry to the birth
And spring time of the world! Ask'd whence is man?
Why form'd at all? and wherefore as he is?
Where must he find his Maker? with what rites
Adore him? will he hear, accept, and bless?
Or does he sit regardless of his works?
Has man within him an immortal seed?
Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
His ashes, where? and in what weal or woe?
Knots worthy of solution, which alone
A Deity could solve. Their answers vague
And all at random, fabulous and dark,
Left them as dark themselves. Their rules of life
Defective and unsanctioned, proved too weak
To bind the roving appetite, and lead
Blind Nature to a God not yet revealed.
'Tis Revelation satisfies all doubts,
Explains all mysteries except her own,
And so illuminates the path of life,
That fools discover it, and stray no more."

Cowper.

From all this we may conclude, that Reason is a faculty as ill-suited to feel the effusion of divine love shed abroad in the human heart, as the ear to relish sweets, or the tongue to judge of melody.

But although the ancients could not discover by Reason or outward research, what revelation was

alone capable of unfolding, it appears that they made one discovery—and a very important one to the point I am discussing, that man, with all his reasoning powers, has not wisdom sufficient to make himself happy. The remarks of Lord Monboddo in his "Ancient Metaphysics," are so clear on this point, that I shall make no apology for quoting his own words.

This author says, that "by the use of intellect, and the arts and sciences invented by us, we have formed a system of life altogether different from the natural; for the perfection of which we believe intelligence alone is sufficient. But this was not the opinion of the wiser ancients, *who thought that human reason alone could not properly conduct human life, without the counsel and assistance of superior powers.* And this has been so much the general sense of mankind in all ages and in all nations, some methods have been practised to obtain that favour and assistance. There has, therefore, always been religion in the world, grounded upon this persuasion, that man, with all his superior faculties, has not wisdom sufficient to make himself happy. But as men, the more they degenerate, grow the vainer, they come at last to believe that without divine assistance, by their own wisdom merely they may be happy; and in such a degenerate state, even, a philosopher may arise,* who will inform them that the less religion they have, the happier they are."

* David Hume.

The same author remarks further, in another place: "As to what I have said of vanity being the source of irreligion, I think it is evident, both from the nature of the thing, and from the characters of the men who in different ages and nations of the world, have been the great apostles of infidelity."†

Now, it is clear, whatever delusions existed formerly, that the ancients, with fewer advantages, had irradiations of light,—transitory gleams of truth, which proved that Reason was not their only instructor; and they arrived at some conclusions which might put modern sceptics to shame. We have no need, therefore, to confine our views to former ages for proofs of Reason's imbecility, when it reaches forward to things beyond the power of its attainment. It is only necessary to look round us in our own day to perceive, in what mazes and labyrinths of confusion men are involved, who place their dependance upon Reason as the potent instrument of good—the only sufficient guide to instruct them in the Divine counsels. We see how easily this faculty may be warped; how artfully what is advanced on one side may be repelled by the other; how soon "the worse" may be made to appear "the better reason," so that men even of sober judgment may be led away, as it were, by a kind of infatuation; and how productive a source of animosity is verbal disputation: how the peace of families is thus broken; the order of public assemblies

† Ancient Metaphysics, vol. ii. B. iv. Ch. 6.

often violated; the gravity of national deliberations turned to uproar; the solemnity of religious discussions into unseemly contention; and how vengeance is often fulminated by kingdom against kingdom, with appeals to Reason and Justice, frequently offensive both to God and man.

I can scarcely do justice to my subject without noticing the following passage from Cowper.

" I see that all are wand'rers, gone astray,
Each in his own delusions; they are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
And never won..... I sum up half mankind
And add two thirds of the remaining half
And find the total of their hopes and fears
Dreams, empty dreams. *The million flit as gay,*
As if created only like the fly,
That spreads his motley wings in th' eye of noon
To sport their season, and be seen no more.
The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise,
And pregnant with discoveries new and rare.
Some write a narrative of wars and feats
Of heroes little known, and call the rant,
A History..... Some drill and bore
The solid earth, and from the strata there
Extract a register, by which we learn
That He who made it, and revealed its date
To Moses, was mistaken in its age.....
Some, more acute, and more industrious still,
Contrive creation; travel nature up
To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
And tell us whence the stars; why some are fixed

And planetary some; what gave them first
Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light.
Great contest follows, and much learned dust
Involves the combatants; each claiming truth
And truth disclaiming both. And thus they spend
The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp
In playing tricks with nature, giving laws
To distant worlds and trifling in their own.
..... When I see such games
Play'd by the creatures of a pow'r, who swears
That he will judge the Earth, and call the fool
To a sharp reck'ning, that has liv'd in vain:
And when I view this seeming wisdom well,
And prove it in th' infallible result
So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
If this be learning, most of all deceiv'd."....
" *God never meant that man should scale the heavens*
By strides of human Wisdom, in his works
Tho' wondrous; he commands us in his word,
To seek him rather, where his mercy shines."

Cowper's Task, Book 3.

If we examine the writings of the greatest men, we have nearly the same opinion of Reason's utter insufficiency for the chief purposes of life. But, it is scarcely necessary to augment the number of testimonies in support of this argument. I apprehend it must be now obvious that Reason of itself can know nothing but what relates wholly to the present scene; that it cannot feel the evidence of a divine spirit, though it may prove the probability of its existence; that it can neither taste any one of the streams of that

fountain from which good springs, nor supply a single draught of vital consolation to the soul in affliction; and, that human reason, however dignified it may be,—yet, as human reason, with all the world's possessions at its command, in the unceasing pursuit of ever-varying earthly enjoyments,—never can fully satisfy the mind.

Therefore, as the soul of man, when engrossed with the love of pleasure, or eager for fame, or ambitious of power, or even ardent in the search after knowledge, refuses to be satisfied,—and reason, though abundantly engaged in the pursuit, cannot satisfy it in any of these sublunary things; it must have an affinity to something above sense, which is immortal. But its immortal nature, having other desires than those which spring from earth—other appetites than those of sense, is rendered incapable of being nourished but by spiritual food, and of being instructed but by a spiritual principle.

It will be our next business to inquire concerning the nature of this principle.

PART II.

OF

THE MORAL RELATIONS

OF

INSTINCT.

CHAP. I.

OF THE OPINIONS OF PHILOSOPHERS ON THE SUBJECT OF A DIVINE INTELLIGENCE IN THE HUMAN MIND.

SECT. I.

Authorities in support of the view now taken.

I PROCEED next to treat of Instinct in its moral relations—a subject involving the highest privileges of man.

And here I shall not stop to inquire whether that principle, which constitutes the glory and establishes the preeminence of human nature, be more fitly denominated an Instinct, Power, Faculty, Sense, belonging intrinsically to the creature as a natural endowment; or a spiritual emanation, divine intelligence, supernatural gift, freely bestowed by the Creator's bounty. As we proceed, this point will be gradually elucidated. But in the course of my speculations, if any of the terms above noticed, as Instinct,

Sense, Faculty, Power, &c. should occasionally be applied to this principle, I hope it may not be thence inferred that I regard them as altogether suitable: for, I shall only use them, while the subject is under discussion, for no other reason than this, that I may not appear to prejudge the question.

We have, I conceive, attained to one important step in this inquiry, namely, that the principle or power in brute animals, as well as in man, which directs physical events not under the creature's control, is far superior in efficiency to that which he himself is accustomed to exercise for the purpose of regulating his ordinary conduct in life. I take it for granted that this point must be admitted by every one who compares the operation of Instinct with that of Human Reason, in the true sense and fair acceptation of the terms.

It follows again, as a natural consequence from the preceding views, that Human Reason, as a guide and director of human conduct, in a variety of ways manifests its weakness. Through all ages down to the present time, it has been found insufficient either for the attainment of true knowledge, or, in its ordinary influence over mankind, to promote human happiness. We see its weakness in its effects. And it was even acknowledged by the wise ancients, who were ignorant of a divine, or rather an extraordinary revelation, to be incompetent of itself to lead man to the perfection of his Being.

Now, "when we consider," in the words of Boyle, "how exquisitely the Great Creator has supplied his animated works with means admirably fitted to attain their respective ends, we cannot but think it highly probable that so wise and bountiful a Being has never left his noblest visible creature man, unfurnished with means to procure *his own welfare*, and obtain *his true end*, if he be not wanting to himself." And the same author concludes, that "Man is very credibly informed, that God hath actually been pleased to discover, *by supernatural means*, what kind of worship and obedience,—*which by Reason alone he could but guess at*,—will be most acceptable to him."*

I have taken occasion to notice the preceding passage from Boyle, not only to point out the opinions of that illustrious author, but to show them in connexion with the views I have adopted. Indeed it has been to me a source of satisfaction, after I had pursued this inquiry to some extent, embracing, as I proceeded, very important considerations, to find, that in looking over some of the writings of eminent men upon the subject, I was in some degree anticipated. For I discovered that I had been following the same natural association of thought which seems to have led others before me from the instinct of brutes to revelation or the inspiration of man.

The allusions these writers have made, as I appre-

* Boyle's works, vol. 2. Christian virtuoso, page 214.

hend, sufficiently shield me from the imputation of indulging a desire for barren metaphysical discussions, and of straining my inferences unnaturally in thus passing from the one consideration to the other. As to metaphysical pursuits, purely such, they must be considered to be generally unprofitable; and I should tread with reluctance on that slippery and uncertain ground, if the nature of my inquiry did not necessarily lead me to notice several of the metaphysical writings most celebrated in the present day. I do so the more willingly, because it is with the view of extracting as much as natural reason has been ready to admit, in support of what I apprehend to be one of the most important and sacred truths in the philosophy of the human mind.

It is not meant to be implied that the sublime truths of Revelation—with which, in their purest sense, I believe the views I shall take will strictly agree—absolutely require the support of natural reason, as it is, or can be, afforded by any of the most enlightened philosophers. On the contrary, I am persuaded, that supernatural light can gain nothing by the feeble glimmering of Reason's lamp, which is the only guide of philosophy in its outward discoveries. But, as this is professedly a natural investigation; and as I mean to go a little farther than those believers in Revelation who take the Holy Scriptures as the only revealed will of God to his creature man, I shall avail myself of any admission or discovery, which, in the present as well as in former ages, philosophers may

have either stumbled upon, as it were, unwittingly; or may have been induced to make, by fair deduction; or may have received from immemorial tradition, or from that light itself which must always bear testimony to its own sufficiency and authority, when the weakness of Reason is made manifest. I shall therefore collect these outward testimonies for these special purposes.

Sir Matthew Hale in his "Primitive Origination of Mankind" has very forcibly pointed out the analogy, above adverted to, between the instincts observable in animated nature, and the original engraven instincts of the mind. His style is, indeed, a little antiquated; but the notions are clearly expressed, only that he uses the term 'Discursive Ratiocination' as the word *Reason* is used in this Essay; and he employs the latter term to denote the whole rational nature of man as distinguished from the brute. Therefore he calls them *rational Instincts*, in contradistinction to the *animal instincts;* but clearly distinguishes them from Reason, or a mere discursive faculty, by making them antecedent to its exercise. "For," he says, "though they are truths acquirable and deducible by argumentation, yet they seem to be inscribed in the very texture of the soul, *antecedent to any acquisition by industry or the exercise of the discursive faculty.*"*—"That, as we see in brutes, there are lodged certain sensible instincts, antecedent to their imaginative or sensitive faculty, whereby they

* See "Primitive origination of Mankind."

are predetermined to the good and convenience of the sensible life; so there are lodged in the very constitution of the soul *certain rational instincts, connaturally engraven in it—antecedently to any discursive ratiocination*, whereby it is predisposed, inclined, and biassed to the good and convenience proportionable to a rational and intellectual life."*

It is proper also to notice that in the term "rational and intellectual life of man," he comprehends his moral and religious capacities: and to the "*rational instincts*," he adds the epithets "*speculative and moral.*"

I have already quoted a passage from Lord Monboddo's Ancient Metaphysics, which shews the same analogy: and Dr. Hartley in his work "On Man," has compared the instinctive direction of brutes to the *inspiration* of the human mind.† All these authorities, therefore, justify the allusion.

I shall next consider the natural evidences or testimonies in favour of the principle in question.

* Hale's Origin, cap. 2.

† "The direction in brutes, to provide for themselves and their offspring, would be a kind of inspiration, mixing itself with and helping out that part of their faculties which corresponds to Reason in us, and which is extremely imperfect in them—only this Inspiration might be called *natural*, as proceeding from the same stated laws of matter and motion, as the other phenomena of nature; whereas the inspiration of the sacred writers appears to be of a much higher source, so as to be termed *supernatural* properly, in contradistinction to all knowledge resulting from the common laws of nature. And yet it may result from some higher laws of nature. For sacred Inspiration would lose nothing of its authority, though it should appear to be within such laws, as by their fixedness might be termed nature." *Hartley on Man.*

Sect. II.

Of the testimonies in favour of such a principle, analogous to Instinct and superior to Reason.

Of the testimonies in favour of any moral truth or principle, when we desire to exclude all evidence but that of the most unprejudiced minds, and at the same time to reconcile that truth with the discoveries made to man by God himself with unquestionable clearness, none appear to me more striking than those of the ancient philosophers, who were totally unacquainted with a written revelation, and followed the native light of their own minds, in other words, built their conclusions upon the fundamental principles of human nature. For, whether these conclusions have been derived from a primeval revelation, by tradition, or from an internal spark of original divine light, still feebly animating the human soul, and though obscured, unextinguished, they are highly to be valued. On the subject before us, no inconsiderable authorities may be produced. My object, therefore, is simply to show, that it has been a general impression among mankind from the earliest ages down to the present time, that a principle, or guide, or light, or teacher, superior to discursive Reason, was implanted

in the human mind;—a principle which might, indeed, have the assistance of reason, the highest natural gift to man, but was antecedent to it, and above it, and had rules for government distinct from reason, evidence of another kind, and objects wholly different. For, as Reason or the natural understanding has objects—the qualities, modes, or relations of external things—fitted to its apprehension, with strict congruity between the faculty and its objects, like that subsisting between the outward senses and their natural objects, or between various other tastes and perceptions peculiar to different men, and the respective objects of these tastes; so has this principle objects, tastes, and feelings, peculiarly its own. For, to suppose that the same power of the mind may be *officially* engaged in ascertaining the properties of a triangle, or discovering the relations of natural things by comparison and inference, and in seeking for divine counsel in retirement, in feeling remorse for evil conduct, or in prostrating the soul in humble reverence before the throne of the Almighty Creator, would seem as incongruous as for the imagination to busy itself with the truths of geometry, or the ear to judge of the shades and beauties of colour, or the eye of odours and sounds. Every one must admit that when men of cultivated minds in different ages and nations are generally agreed in opinion upon any philosophical question, we have the strongest reason, short of revelation, to conclude, that it is founded in truth. And the opinion of a few opposed to such a

cloud of witnesses can have little weight in invalidating the conclusion.

We find Pythagorean, Stoic, Peripatetic, and those of the Academic school admitting the same truth. We find also Greek and Roman poets coinciding in opinion; and even their historians confirming the doctrine by facts deduced from particular races of men.

It is fair, indeed, to admit, that Pythagoras confused his notion of a "derived intelligence" and "divine principle" in the soul, with many absurd speculations; and Plato obscured his doctrine of a "spiritual emanation" with some romantic and visionary conceptions. But though this was the case, the point in which they agreed with many enlightened philosophers, ancient and modern, is not to be confounded with the mystical allusions that were superadded. Whilst they admitted some divine intelligence in the human mind, they erred in the expression, making the mind itself a divinity. But it was the opinion of the Platonic philosophers, that the same God, who made all things, is himself the light of our minds, by which we are enabled to learn true wisdom.

It is to be observed, too, that the ancients, as well as many moderns, have used the word Reason to comprehend all the rational nature of man, by which he is elevated above the brute. Hence, a little confusion may be observed in their mode of expression; as, when they speak of Divine reason in the soul.

The distinction between that power of the mind which takes a discursive range and draws inferences by its own strength, from the comparisons, relations, congruities, and incongruities of things already ascertained, and an instinctive principle which teaches as it were by intuition, without the medium of formal or specific propositions, must be obvious to every one. The first only is properly entitled to the name of Reason.

Epictetus says, that "God has assigned to each man a director, his own good genius—a guardian whose vigilance no slumbers interrupt, and whom no false reasonings can deceive. So that, when you have shut your door and darkened your room, say not, that you are alone; for your God is within, and your Guardian is with you."*

Marcus Antoninus observes, "That seeing we ought to live to God; he who is well disposed will do every thing dictated by the divinity—a particle or portion of himself, which God has given to each as a guide and leader."†

Aristotle says, that "the mind of man hath a near affinity to God, and that there is a divine ruler in him, νους θειοις συγγενεστατος, το θειον εν αυτω αρχον. He also declares, according to Cudworth, that there is in the mind λογου τι κρειττον which is λογου αρχη—"Something better than reason and knowledge, which is the principle and original of it." For, says he, λογου αρχη ου λογος, αλλα

* Epictet. Lib. 1. Ch. 14.
† M. Antonin. Lib. 5. Sect. 27.

τι κρειττον. "The principle of reason is not reason, but something better. "We have all of us," Cudworth adds, "by nature, μαντευμα τι (as both Plato and Aristotle call it,) *a certain divination*, presage and *vaticination*, in our minds, of some higher good and perfection than either power or knowledge." Intellectual System, p. 203.* Aristotle further observes, that "*knowledge* is acquired by diligence, but *wisdom* and discretion come from God."

Plutarch says, "the light of truth is a law, not written in tables or books, but dwelling in the mind; always as a living rule, which never permits the soul to be destitute of an interior guide."

"The light and spirit of God (says Plato), are as wings to the soul, or as that which raiseth up the soul into a sensible communion with God, above the world."—"Wisdom is a tree that springeth from the *heart*."

Plotinus, one of the Platonic school, observes, that "as the Sun cannot be known but by his own light; so God cannot be known but with his own light. And as the eye cannot see the Sun but by receiving its image; so man cannot know God, but by receiving his image."

According to Seneca, "There is a holy spirit in us, that deals with us, as he is dealt with by us."—"God is near thee, and he is in thee; the holy spirit sits or resides within us, the observer of our good and

* See Dawson's Origin of Laws, and Stewart's Elements, vol. 2. p. 21.

evil actions. Every man has a judgment and a witness within himself of all the good and ill that he does."—"A good man is influenced by God himself, and has a kind of divinity within him."

"The conscience of man," says Antisthenes, "is (in himself) a secret knowledge, a private opener, testimony, or witness—a tormentor or a joyful quieter of the mind of man in all his doings."*

In accordance with the views which have been given, it was generally agreed that the human intellect, embracing all its capacities, was of divine extraction.

The saying of Pythagoras, Θεῖον γένος ἐστι βροτοῖσι, and that of the Poets Aratus and Cleanthes, quoted by the Apostle, τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμὲν,† accord with the testimony of the inspired Law-giver, that man was created after the image and likeness of his Maker.

Antoninus calls the mind or rational principle of man "Θεία ἀπομοιρα, ἀποσασμα"—*a portion or particle of the Divinity.*

Epictetus designates it "Του Διος μερος," *a part of the Deity.*

Euripides and Menander—"Ο νους γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστιν ὁ θεος," *the mind or understanding in us is a divine principle.*

Horace dignifies it as "divinæ particulam auræ," *a particle of divine life or essence.*

* See Bockett's Gentile Divinity, p. 21. See also the Sayings of Pythagoras, Timæus, Socrates, &c. in Clarkson's Portraiture, vol. 2. ch. 6. to the same effect.

† Acts xvii. 28.

Seneca calls it "Scintilla divinæ lucis,"—"*a spark of divine light,*" corresponding to Cicero's expression, Radiatio Dei,—"*a ray of the divinity.*" And in another place Cicero thus speaks of the human understanding: "Humanus animus, decerptus ex mente divina, cum alio nullo, nisi cum ipso deo, si hoc fas est dictu, comparari potest." "The human soul being extracted from the divine Intelligence, can be compared with no other Being, if it be lawful so to speak, save with God himself."*

Sect. III.

On the enlarged use of the word Reason.

Having now seen the human mind—as far as these extracts will enable us to view it—tracing its affinity through the mists and obscurity of its natural powers, to the Supreme Fountain of Light; and, though groping, as it were, in darkness, claiming for itself the distinction of possessing an internal guide of the same illustrious descent; it should be our next business to inquire respecting the operation of this power, and to consider by what process the partially enlightened heathen supposed that Divine truth was received, that maxims of religious duty were made known,

* Ciceronis Tusc. Quæst. l. 5. s. 13.

and that moral laws of eternal and immutable obligation were discovered:—whether by a process of laborious research, like that by which all outward knowledge is attained, or by an immediately actuating impulse, springing from the inherent principles of the human mind. But on this head I shall only make a brief remark; and, after I have shown by several examples, in what an enlarged sense the word *Reason* has been used, shall proceed to consider, whether we are wholly the creatures of education, and our knowledge received like pictures on a dark wall, or like liquor into an empty vessel; or whether the mind has not originally in itself the elements or seeds of virtue; which, by proper care and culture, may be developed into various degrees of religious and moral excellence.

It is difficult to imagine that the ancients, whose opinions are quoted, could have expressed themselves as they have done, had they not believed that man possessed, in his own mind, a light, principle, or guide, which, if heeded and obeyed, would instinctively point out to him the truth, so far as it might concern him to know it, and thus lead him to pursue the path of rectitude. For, no sophistry can elude the force of the argument, that fundamental laws of human belief—principles or emotions universally diffused, common to all men in all ages, and entering as much into the constitution of human nature as the appetites, affections, or outward senses, cannot in their origin be traced from *without*. Consequently, they must be engraven *within*, and constitute an in-

ward law, though discoverable by Reason, yet antecedent to the exercise of Reason, and therefore a natural instinctive revelation from the Source of Wisdom. And, when we consider that this secret intelligence, these instinctive intimations are not designed for mere outward advantage, like the reasoning faculty, but for the chief ends of man's being—his eternal interests, *a priori* we should conclude, that such a revelation of the will of God,—not confined to soil or to climate, to tribe or to nation,—not intrusted only to the casualty and uncertainty of a written law, or only to the learned in outward knowledge, would be communicated to man, rather than that the elements of his moral duty should be left wholly to the tardy deductions of human reason, to be excogitated and propounded by this faculty.

But it is evident that the ancients, who recognised this universal principle, gave it different appellations, as, the Light of Truth, the Divine Spirit, Conscience, and also Reason. It was the God within the soul of Pythagoras and Epictetus; the Genius or Guide of Socrates and Timæus; the Light and Spirit of God of Plato; the Divine Principle of Plotin; the Divine Power and Reason of Philo. Hence, the word Reason comprehended the most excellent powers of the human mind, as it has been used by many of the moderns. It comprehended the whole rational nature of man that elevates him above the brute; in short, it implied the highest degree of perfection to which the human intellect, by whatever means en-

lightened, can attain; and included the speculative or discursive faculty, which discovers truth by weighing outward evidence, with nothing but outward facts and observations for its materials, as well as the power which offers its *elements* or *seeds*, or *first principles* of *right* and *wrong* spontaneously to the mind, and which sits as a judge of moral actions to approve or to condemn.

In modern works we may notice the same latitude of meaning. And it is scarcely going too far to say that it has been productive of modes of thinking which have led to unfavourable, not to say unphilosophical conclusions, in matters of religion and morality. Notwithstanding the light of Revelation has been so amply afforded, this comprehensive use of the word Reason has led many of the moderns as far from the notions of the ancients, as above detailed, as if it had never been suggested by the heathen philosopher, nor revealed by the Christian law-giver, that a divine spirit which draws not its teaching from men, instructed *immediately* the human mind.

Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Antoninus, and others, use *Reason* in this comprehensive acceptation, while they seem to have admitted that Truth may be received without a regular process of *reasoning* or argumentation, according to the notion of an eminent writer that "there is a sanctity of soul and body of more efficacy for the receiving of divine truths than the greatest pretences to discursive demonstration."*

* More's Divine Dialogues.

It is singular enough that the word Λογος, used by the Greeks, and translated *Reason*, is the very Logos, or divine Word, of the evangelist John. At the same time it is generally understood to mean the faculty of Reason, or power of ratiocination; and the word Logic itself, which signifies the science of reasoning, confirms the etymology.

I shall now refer to some examples of this comprehensive use of the word Reason, on which I am commenting, in the writings of the moderns.

Dugald Stewart, in his Philosophy of the Human Mind, makes some valuable observations on the use of the word *Reason*, which he employs "to denote merely the power by which we distinguish truth from falsehood, and combine means for the attainment of our ends." "The word Reason," he says, "is far from being precise in its meaning. In common and popular discourse, it denotes that power by which we distinguish truth from falsehood, and right from wrong; and by which we are enabled to combine means for the attainment of particular ends.—These different capacities are all included in the idea which is generally annexed to the word *reason*; and the case, so far as I know, is the same with the corresponding term in all languages whatever."—He observes, though in opposition to the high authorities of Dr. Johnson and Dr. Beattie, that "for many years past, reason has been very seldom used by philosophical writers, or, indeed, by correct writers of any description, as synonymous with the power of

reasoning. To appeal to the light of human reason, from the reasonings of the schools, is surely an expression to which no good objection can be made, on the score either of vagueness or of novelty;"*

He is therefore desirous not to confound our rational powers in general, in which he includes the *elements of Reasoning itself*, in other words, *the fundamental laws of human belief*, with that particular branch of them, known among logicians by the name of the *Discursive Faculty*. And he says, "the remark of Dr. Campbell, 'that without the aid of some other mental power than the discursive faculty, we could never attain a notion of what is *good*,' is undoubtedly true, and may be applied to all those systems which ascribe to Reason the origin of our moral ideas, if the expressions Reason and Discursive Faculty be used as synonymous."

The foregoing remarks are extremely important, and merit very mature consideration.

But though he does not "call in question the accuracy of those who have ascribed to it the function of distinguishing right from wrong," he does not himself assign to Reason this function.†

Some authors are quoted by this writer to shew the enlarged acceptation in which the word has been used.

"Reason (says Hooker) is the director of man's will, discovering in action what is good; for the laws of well-doing are the dictates of right reason."

Stewart also quotes a passage from a discourse by

* Elements of Philosophy, vol. 2, p. 67. † Ib. vol. 2, p. 11,

Dr. Adams of Oxford, in which he says, "Power may compel, interest may bribe, pleasure may persuade, (to do what appears to our moral judgment wrong;) but Reason only can oblige. This is the only authority which rational beings can own, and to which they owe obedience." Milton dignifies the faculty of Reason in the same manner, in that part of his poem, where he says—

> "There wanted yet the master-work, the end
> Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
> And brute as other creatures, but endued
> With sanctity of Reason, might erect
> His stature."——"In devotion to adore
> And worship God supreme, who made him chief
> Of all his works."

In the following passage, where Locke contrasts the light of Reason with that of Revelation, Stewart takes for granted that when he speaks of truth as the object of natural reason, it was principally, if not wholly, *moral* truth, which he had in his view: "Reason is natural Revelation, whereby the eternal Father of Light, and Fountain of all Knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties. Revelation is natural Reason, enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God himself."

Upon this passage it is my intention to make a few comments hereafter. I only introduce it at present to show the very great latitude in which the word Reason has been used.

Huygens also affords us an apt illustration of the same thing, when he says, "It is Reason which produces the sense of justice, honesty, praise, mercy, gratitude, and teaches us to distinguish between good and evil universally."

Now the question is not whether these eminent writers and others were wrong in their use of the word Reason in this comprehensive signification; but whether it is possible for the human mind to be instructed and enlightened, so as to apprehend many important elementary truths, by an innate light, as it were, intuitively; or whether it is wholly by a discursive act and labour of its own, that such knowledge is attained: for upon the former point, the whole force of the argument I am endeavouring to maintain, manifestly hinges. If the term Reason properly includes such a power, the matter is easily settled.

It is very clear, however, that the former opinion has been embraced by many; otherwise we should not hear of "*the innate light of the rational faculty more primary than the rules of reasoning*," as used by Boyle;—*the stock of rational instincts, inscribed in the soul*, or "*connatural and engraven truths*" noticed by Judge Hale;—"*the law written in all men's hearts*" mentioned by Hooker;—*the light and law of nature* spoken of by the Apostle Paul, by Cicero, and by many others.

It would not be easy to find, in the works of any writer, a description more beautifully illustrative of this light or law of Reason common to the whole

human family, than in that passage preserved by Lactantius from the *lost* book of Cicero, "de Republica."

"Right Reason (says he) is truly and properly a law, agreeable to man's nature universally. It is a law constant and eternal, which calls upon men to do good, and prohibits the doing of evil. Good men hear it and obey it, but the wicked resist its voice. This law is not to be abrogated by any power on earth. Neither prince nor senate nor people can absolve from it. Nor are we to seek for any other expounder and interpreter of this law but its own light. This law is eternal and unchangeable; it doth not assume one aspect at Athens, and another at Rome; but looks upon all nations and persons with an impartial eye, and shines upon ages and times with a perpetual light. It is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. There is but one Law-giver, one Lord and Supreme Judge of this law: God was the contriver of it, the commander of it, the promulgator of it: and none can be exempted from it, unless he will be banished as it were from himself, and renounce the nature of man: and this punishment would have sting enough in it, though he should escape a thousand more, which may be due for so foul a transgression."—And again, in his book, *De Legibus*, Cicero says, "I perceive, therefore, it was the opinion of the wisest men, that LAW was not originally discovered by the ingenuity of man, as a spark struck from the human intellect, or kindled and blown up with

popular breath; but is to be considered as an eternal light shining from God himself to illuminate and guide the universe.—The obliging power of law is more ancient than cities and nations—yea, as ancient as God the king and ruler of heaven and earth:—So that if there had not been any positive law at Rome, in the reign of Tarquin, to restrain his lust; yet there was an eternal law, which did not *then* begin to be a law when it became written, but when it began to exist; and its existence is as ancient as that of the Divine intellect." "Therefore Law is nothing else than such a *right* Reason, as enjoins what is good, and prohibits the contrary, and derives its origin from God himself."*

We may conclude that Strabo referred to this law, in his character of the Scythians, when he says, that "they were found in the practice of justice, not by the enforcement of any written laws, but *by the light and testimony of their own natural genius*:" and hence that it was not by the exercise of Reason, according to some outward rule of expediency, that they discovered the superior excellence of virtue. "For it seems wonderful," he remarks, "that Nature should have given to them what the Greeks have never been able to attain, either by a long succession of the doctrines of their wise men, or by the precepts of their philosophers, and that the manners of a barbarous should excel those of a refined people."†

* See Dawson's Origin of Laws, book 1. ch. 2.

† See Clarkson's Portrait. vol. 2. ch. 6.

As a further illustration of the subject, and as a proof of the coincidence of opinion in the minds of different persons, I shall select a passage from Dryden's *Religio Laici*, and another from Dawson's *Origin of Laws*, to which I have just referred.

The latter writer identifies this Law of Reason, as it has been so often called, with the law of nature written in the heart; and not only so, but with "the light, that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world." From which it will appear, that, unless we are willing to call Reason, natural revelation, and natural revelation, Reason, convertibly, we must be satisfied to have no distinction between original implanted instincts,—the foundation of this universal law, and acquired maxims, elicited by the strength of the human intellect,—the offspring of the discursive faculty.

"It is most certain," he observes, "that the Gentiles who never heard of Moses, or of Christ, or the law and the Prophets, or had ever any divine positive law given them, or some of them scarcely any human positive law; yet, were they under the obligation of a law; and that law could be no other than the law of Reason. '*For the Gentiles (saith St. Paul) who had not the law, did by nature the things contained in the law; and having not the law were a law to themselves:*' which shews that the work of the law was written in their hearts. There is therefore a Νόμος γράπτος, a law writ by the finger of God, in the heart of every one; which is that which we call the Law of Reason.

This is also confirmed by our blessed Lord and only Law-giver: *For* (saith he) *and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?* As if he had said, you have a light within you, by which you may discern what is right and wrong, and just and unjust; that is, you have a rule, by which, you may, if you will, measure and square your actions, or a law, which plainly doth decree, and judiciously determine of these matters, which is 'that light which enlighteneth every man which cometh into the world,' or the Law of Reason."*

Now I am ready to think, it will appear, that in the following passage from Dryden, the word Reason has a more distinct and appropriate signification, than it has in some of the preceding illustrations.

Dryden supposes "that the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of Revealed Religion in the posterity of Noah; and that our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophising divines, *have too much exalted the faculties of our souls*, when they have maintained, that by their force, mankind have been able to find out that there is one supreme Agent or intellectual Being, which we call God: that praise and prayer, are his due worship; and the rest of those *deducements, which, I am confident,*" he adds, "*are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our Discourse* (Reason);—I mean, as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination: so that *we* have not

* See the Origin of Laws, ubi supra.

lifted up ourselves to God, by the weak pinions of our *Reason*, but *He* has been pleased to descend to us; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the Heathen Philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of Revelation after the Sun of it was set in the race of Noah."*

Notwithstanding what is above stated, it seems to have been Dryden's opinion that *that portion* of revealed truth which was communicated by Noah to his descendants, was carried down *by tradition* until it was gradually "eclipsed to the greater part of mankind, when the light of nature, as the next in dignity, was substituted; and that is it which St. Paul concludes to be the rule of the Heathens, and by which they are hereafter to be judged." Dryden does not seem to have entertained the question, whether this *light of nature*, as it is called—"*the rule of the Heathen*," be not itself a spark of divine revelation, though greatly obscured by the depravity of human nature. He has not clearly explained, whether, according to his ideas, this twilight of Revelation, with which some of the wise men of old were favoured, has been diffused by tradition *only*; or whether it is still emitted from the fountain of Light through an

* "Dim as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars,
To lonely, weary, wand'ring travellers,
Is Reason to the soul: and as on high,
These rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here: so Reason's glimm'ring ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day."

Dryden.

obscured atmosphere of the mind, and in greater or smaller measure distributed to mankind universally, as the privilege of a being created after the similitude of God himself.* The latter, I apprehend, after what has been said, must be viewed as the true state of the case.

I have thus endeavoured, in this Section, to point out, not only what has been commonly received among the learned as the authorised, but what appears to be the true signification of the word Reason. Yet I am aware that in producing passages from different authors to illustrate the meaning of words, the attention is apt to be distracted and turned away from the immediate object in view. It appears, however, to be more necessary to have clear ideas on this point, because we so frequently hear of debates on the use and province of Reason in religious matters; as by some, it is contrasted with, and opposed to, revelation; by many too much exalted, as if it needed no other helper, and by many undervalued, as if any of the Lord's gifts—and especially the moderating principle of our outward conduct and instrument of the sciences—was bestowed upon us in vain.

* With regard to the universal consent of mankind on a very important truth, Maximus Tyrius, a Platonic philosopher, affords us a very striking testimony:—speaking of the existence of the Deity, he says, "In such a contest, and tumult, and disagreement, (about other matters of opinion) you may see this one law and language acknowledged by common accord. This the Greek says, and this the barbarian says, and the inhabitant of the continent, and the islander; and the wise and the unwise."——See the original quoted by Stewart—Elements, vol. 2. p. 80.

We see, then, that Reason is sometimes used for the light of the intellect, or for the perfection of human intellect, howsoever enlightened, comprehending the rational as well as moral powers of the mind, cultivated to the highest pitch of excellence: and in this sense, perhaps it may be said, that Reason and Revelation cannot justly be placed in opposition. But when the word is employed, as it commonly is, in modern speculations, for the Discursive faculty alone, or to designate what is meant by the strength and power of human wisdom, unaided by divine counsel, or unassisted by revelation,—which seems to be its proper place,—then it becomes essentially necessary to distinguish them.

For, it is clear, from some of the preceding quotations, that, if the term be rightly used, to Reason belong the highest court and office in the human mind. I cannot therefore but freely confess my own opinion, that to include in the word Reason, while it is liable to such an ambiguity of meaning, all that excellence of the human character, which arises from the cultivation of our highest endowments, is far from being conducive to the interests, much less the diffusion, of a pure and vital Christianity.

As I shall have to consider this subject more fully hereafter, it will be necessary to enter a little more into the nature and office of the Reasoning faculty, than I should otherwise have done. No one, I apprehend, can doubt, that, when the word Reason is employed in modern discourse, as applicable to

matters of religion, it is never meant to include Revelation mediate or immediate—however it may be supposed, according to Locke, to be invested with legitimate right to take cognizance of revelation.

Now, it may be observed, that Reason, in the enlarged acceptation to which I have alluded, embraced three powers or principles very necessary to be distinguished.

First.—It included that power of the mind, which enables it to investigate and find out Truth speculatively, as in science and the common business of life, by observation and experience, and to distinguish it from falsehood, by means of propositions, comparisons, and deductions; hence properly called the Discursive faculty or power of Reasoning.

Secondly.—It comprehended the elements of Reason itself—the rudiments, seeds, or principles from which all natural reasoning must spring; denominated by Judge Hale "rational instincts,"—by Boyle "the innate Light of Reason, or primitive ideas and rules of true and false,"—by Cudworth "innate cognoscitive power,"—by Stewart, "the fundamental laws of human belief, or primary elements of human reason,"—by Reid and Beattie, "the principles of common sense," as being common to all mankind;—by others, "self-evident truths, axioms, common sentiments, and intuitive principles."

Thirdly.—The power or source of moral sentiment from which man receives primarily the emotions which give rise to the knowledge of right and wrong, good

and evil; and by which he is enabled to feel the obligation of duty to God and to his fellow creature; in which power may be included the first principles or *seeds* of moral truth, the *sparks* of a divine intelligence in the soul, the *light* that enlighteneth every man—from the necessity of the case, changing the metaphor to express the meaning more fully; also variously denominated "the law written in the heart,"*—"connatural moral instincts"†—"the first rudiments of natural justice, charity and benignity."‡

* Hooker. † Halè. ‡ ibid.

CHAP. II.

OF THE NATURE OF THE MENTAL FACULTIES, AND THE PRIMARY ELEMENTS OF REASONING AND MORAL FEELING.

SECT. I.

Of the nature of the Mental Faculties.

As it is my intention to make some general observations on the developement of the various powers of the human mind from their original rudiments or seeds, I shall take this opportunity of premising a few particulars, by way of illustration, on the elements both of our rational and moral principles. For, if it be proved, or deemed highly probable, that in order to constitute the power of Reasoning, some original seeds, or, as they have been called, "*inchoatae intelligentiae*," must be presupposed, as already implanted in the mind by the Author of our being; we cannot wonder that the same thing should be true, but in a more eminent degree, of the moral principle and its seeds, or instincts.

And, by adopting this method, I flatter myself, that we shall be better prepared to examine and appreciate the tendency of a very celebrated writer's opinion on this subject,—a man whose name cannot be mentioned but with respect and admiration, both for his virtues and his genius, I mean,—the enlightened Locke. In laying this foundation, I conceive it to be particularly important to produce such a coincidence of unbiassed authorities before my reader, as, while it qualifies him to determine what degree of deference may be due to these authorities, may enable him also to judge how far the notion is consistent with sound analogy, which assumes, that the human mind, in its infant or undeveloped state, may with propriety be compared to "a white sheet of paper" or "to an empty cabinet." I propose therefore to adduce some testimonies on this point; and first relatively to the ground-work of reason; which, as before remarked, I use in the signification with which I set out in the beginning of this Essay. I shall afterwards proceed to consider the elements or seeds of moral sentiments.

Now, as we can have no true conception of the nature, constitution, or essence of the mind, but from its powers or faculties and the phenomena of their enlargement,—in like manner, as we can know nothing of the rudiments or original state of the body, but from the position and developement of its limbs and organs,—I am well aware that in attempting to describe the elements or principles of human thought,

it is extremely difficult to use proper expressions, in as much as they must all be borrowed from material objects. Hence, in endeavouring to give correct notions of what is meant by a seed, first principle, primary tendency, instinct, or original impulse of the mind, influencing its judgments or its moral conduct; it is possible there may be great variety of expression, and yet that one and the same class of phenomena may be distinctly referred to under all this variety, as different authors may have laid hold of one analogy or another. And this is evinced by the different appellations above recited, given to the same thing; just as the understanding is considered to be capable of containing within itself either originally, the seeds or elements, fountains, germs, or rudiments of knowledge, or of being furnished in a secondary way with its materials, like a dark room with pictures or images, representing external things, successively painted on its walls. It can hardly be doubted that the enlargement of the intellect and the developement of the mental capacities, bear some analogy to the evolution, growth and expansion of the several parts of the ovum and of a seed or germ. For it would seem as unphilosophical to suppose that immaterial knowledge should be conveyed into the mind, wholly from without, in the mechanical way that shells are conveyed into a cabinet or wine into a cask, as to expect that the shell of a nut, without the organized kernel, would form a tree; or that the mere husk of a grain of wheat, with all the care of outward culture

that could be bestowed upon it, would appropriate to itself nourishment, and shoot up into the stem the blade and the ear. Every rudiment, or seed in nature, has inherent in itself certain *appetencies* by which it draws and attracts to itself something without. These appetencies are its own; and though some tendencies may be acquired, it has, notwithstanding, strong native tendencies towards the purposes of its creation. And the more its design in the creation is fulfilled, and the ends of its being accomplished, the more do these original *appetencies* display themselves to the praise and glory of the great Author. Do the materials of knowledge bear a different relation to the mind, from that which the outward elements, air, earth, heat, and moisture, bear to the seed or plant? If they bear the same relation, it is obvious, that the mind must have originally in itself, all the *rudiments* of all its capacities, the *germs* of its propensities, the latent *spark* of intellect, the *fountain* of its benevolent affections, the dawning *light* of its immortal affinity and *seed* of divine Truth; ready to be opened, expanded, enlarged; or to remain closed, obscured, contracted, according to the neglect or care of cultivation.

But to return to the consideration of a suitable phraseology, as it will be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish in effect between the original implanted instinct, influencing the will by an immediate impulse to action, and the acquired rule or motive secondarily produced by tradition or intellectual

research, so it will be difficult to find suitable forms of expression, to denote these respective mental phenomena. It is also clear, that different analogies will suggest different modes of expression, as the mind may be said to contain within itself a seed, a root, a fountain, a spark, a light, a rudiment, a germ, an idea or image. It is remarkable that every one of these things, except the last, refers essentially to something naturally engendered and figuratively in the mind itself; but the word *idea* or *image* is well chosen for that system, which considers the mind like a dark room or a white sheet of paper, and which makes the resemblances of outward things to constitute the chief materials of intellectual operations and intellectual expansion. How mere images or forms should enlarge a mental faculty, is as inconceivable, as that immaterial conceptions should expand any bodily organ. In the case of the brain this is said to be possible: but the degree and the mode are equally unknown; and there is clearly a limit,—a very straitened expansion, if the fact should be admitted.

Leaving, however, this discussion for the present, as I hope to resume it in a more proper place, I may observe that the extracts from the writings of Boyle, Sir Matthew Hale, and Cudworth, will perhaps be open to animadversion when they are judged according to the standard of expression in modern metaphysical works; and may be thought by some obsolete on this account. But although the phraseology may be uncouth, yet if we can understand what the

mean, and can gather important truths or facts in the philosophy of the human mind from their writings, the end will be sufficiently answered. It would seem, indeed, that the clearest metaphysical heads are liable to some degree of obscurity on this point: because most of them differ in expression, if they do not in opinion. Though Locke introduced a greater precision of language than had been known before his time, yet his use of the word *Idea* in so general a sense as he employed it, has drawn a sort of apology from himself,* and has given rise to very strange if not absurd conclusions, perhaps logically deduced, from others, as Hume and Berkley. Dugald Stewart seems to be fully aware of this verbal ambiguity, and passes some just remarks on the "Common Sense" of Beattie and Reid, which appears to have been used by these writers in by far too general a signification. A volume might be written in pointing out the different meanings in which words in most common use relative to mental principles, powers, capacities, and operations, are employed by different authors. But it would be a discouraging circumstance, if amidst all this variety, we could not come at some general truths acknowledged by all. With respect to the word *Instinct*, as applicable to the original tendencies of the human mind, and especially as applicable to the first movements or elements of intellectual and moral power, it may be liable to some objection. Yet it is desirable to have some words as

* See Introduction to Essay on Human Understanding.

remote as possible from objects of sense, to denote the inherent and original workings of the mind itself: and *Instinct* may be one of these. For, it is clear, that objects of sense are only the occasion, remote or immediate, they are not the instruments, of the mind's operations; they are the exciting causes, but not the state of excitement or operation itself. The excitement and the instruments or faculties belong intrinsically to the mind. Impressions from outward objects may affect the mind with what are called Ideas, as, to employ a coarse analogy, outward food may excite the animal system, and rouse the animal functions. But it is its own labour upon these ideas, by its own inherent vigour, with its own innate powers, that can convert them to its use, and enlarge the various faculties, according to the quality of the impressions received; as it is by the powers of digestion and assimilation, that the aliment is appropriated to the several bodily organs. Hence human knowledge, whether it consists in the acquirement of art or science, or literature, or in the growth and enlargement of our best affections, by the exercise of different mental capacities, is not *something without* the mind; any more than food appropriated to bone, vessel, gland, muscle, by the action of different organs, is *something without* the body. But what is true of the profound and elaborately deduced logical proposition or mathematical theorem, is true also of the primary elements of the proposition. They belong essentially to the mind; and education cannot, in the true sense

of the word, or absolutely, impart them, though it may enable the mind to *draw them forth*, as the word implies, and to recognize them as something congenial to its own nature—in fact, as truth, commanding its implicit assent, immediately they are fairly brought under its notice.

Sect. II.

Of the primary elements of Reasoning.

From the preceding considerations, it will follow, that all enlargement of the mind, all improvement of its capacities, all real knowledge, must consist, and can only consist, in the evolution of its own powers, as these are severally acted upon by external things, or by external qualities of mind in others. For as external material things have a congruity to the natural senses, and *vice versa*, the eye to light, the ear to sounds, the tongue to sweets, the smell to perfumes; so the qualities or manifestations of mind in our fellow creatures, as gratitude, humanity, justice, honesty, sincerity, temperance, modesty, and their opposites, have a congruity to certain innate powers in us, affecting us with pleasure or pain, love or aversion, the sense of good or ill desert, and many other feelings common to our nature. But it is a low and degrading idea to suppose that the cultiva-

tion of mental power consists in the mind being as it were *mechanically* filled with its thoughts or emotions from without, as jewels are placed in a casket; or in its being ornamented with outward resemblances and images, as figures are represented in a looking-glass. This analogy may at first sight appear plausible, for on abstruse subjects we are willing to lay hold of any analogy that may seem calculated to explain even part of the difficulty; but, if it is examined, it will be found not to have one particle of the analogy of nature; and therefore to be false and to lead to erroneous conclusions. Knowledge has no relation whatever either on the one hand to empty shadows, or, on the other, to the gross materials of a cabinet. For, real substantial knowledge in the mind, must be as unlike any thing received from without, or discovered without, except in the minds of others; as a piece of bread is unlike a living muscular fibre, or as air, earth, and water, are, in themselves, unlike the living organized system of a plant. What is communicated from without, may, indeed, be assimilated by intellectual labour, till it constitute effective and substantial truth or knowledge; as air, earth, and water, with the aid of heat and light, may be subdued and assimilated by the power of vegetation to the very nature and substance of the plant. Neither perception, nor memory can do this. The mere act of treasuring ideas in the memory does not add a single *iota* to the real intellectual power of the mind.

This observation, I apprehend, to be intimately connected in principle with that theory of original seeds or elements of thought in the mind, which I am disposed to maintain. I shall now subjoin a few illustrations.

On this head the language of Boyle is particularly appropriate: because he does not argue for one opinion more decidedly than another; I shall, therefore, give several extracts from his writings.

"God hath made us men of a limited nature in general, and of a bounded capacity; and accordingly hath furnished man *either with certain innate ideas or models, and principles;* or with a faculty or power and disposition easily to frame them, as it meets with occasions to excite them. But, because God intended the mind of man of a limited capacity, his understanding is so constituted, that the *inbred* or easily acquired ideas, and primitive axioms, wherewith it is furnished, and by relation or analogy whereto, it judges of all other notions and propositions, do not extend to all knowable objects whatsoever; but reach only to such as *have a sufficient affinity*, or *bear some proportion* to those *primary ideas and rules of truth;* which are sufficient, if duly improved, to help us to attain, though not the perfect knowledge of truth of the highest order, yet the competent knowledge of as much Truth, as God thought fit to allow our minds, in their present state of union with our bodies."

"The *innate light* of the rational faculty, is more

primary than the very rules of reasoning."..... "There are some things which the intellect usually judges of in a kind of organical way;—that is, by the help of certain rules or hypotheses"—"but there are others which it knows, without the help of these rules, more immediately and, as it were, *intuitively*, by evidence or perception."....."And it seems to me that the *internal light* which the Author of nature has set up in the mind of man, qualifies him, if he makes a right use of it, not only to apply the instruments of knowledge, but also to frame and examine them."*

It cannot be doubted that the preceding passage applies exclusively to the elements of reason: as does the following from Sir Matthew Hale. I have already taken notice of the analogy drawn by this writer

* See Boyle's works abridged by Shaw, vol. 2, pages 201, 206, 209, and 220.

"The rational soul that is already furnished *with primitive ideas and rules of true and false*"—in other words, "when duly excited, is furnished with *a light* that may enable her to judge, even of many of those *original notions*, by which she judges of other things." "For, by the help of this light, the understanding is enabled to look about, and both to consider apart, and compare together, the nature of all kinds of things; without being necessitated to employ in its speculations, the rules, or dictates of any particular science, or discipline; being sufficiently *assisted by its own light, and those axioms and notions, that are of a general nature, and perpetual truths*; and so of a higher order than the dictates or rules of any particular or subordinate science."

"These are supposed to be connate—and are assented to upon their own account, without needing any medium or discursive act to prove them: because, that, as soon as they are plainly proposed to the understanding they discover themselves to be true so manifestly by their own light, that they want no proposition to make the understanding acquiesce in them."

Boyle's works abridged, vol. 2. p. 201—206.

between human and brute instincts. He says that "as there are animal instincts in brutes, directing them to what is useful and convenient to the sensible life; so there are engraven in the soul certain rational instincts; implanted and connatural anticipations, antecedent to any discursive ratiocination;—which, though they are not so distinct and explicit as the former (those of brutes) yet they are secret biases whereby it is disposed, and inclined to the good and convenience proportionable to a rational and intellectual life." Besides this, Sir Matthew Hale considers that "each individual has a certain congenite stock of rational sentiments and inclinations; implying that he has original instincts determining him to such a way of life as is suitable to his nature."* And he observes, that "the high exercise of ratiocination might evince the truth and excellency of these connatural principles, because they are in themselves highly reasonable, though there were no such originally inscribed in the mind. But this no more concludes against the supposition, (of their being originally inscribed), than it would conclude against the supposition of implanted instincts in brutes."† See page 62.

* Hale Prim. orig. sect. I. ch. 2.

† In the 4th section, the same idea is expressed in other words:—"As we find in the sensitive natures certain *congenite or connatural instincts*, whereby they are secretly and powerfully biassed, and inclined, and carried to their proper sensitive good"—"so there seems to be lodged in the intellective and rational nature certain *rudiments and tendencies* whereby they are carried to the good of an intellectual life,

The judicious Hooker remarks, "That the main principles of Reason are in themselves apparent. For to make nothing evident of itself unto man's understanding, were to take away all possibility of knowing any thing. And herein, he adds, that of Theophrastus is true, '*They that seek a reason of all things do utterly destroy all reasoning.*' In every kind of knowledge, some such grounds there are, as that being proposed, the mind doth presently embrace them, as free from the possibility of error, clear and manifest *without proof.*"*

Aristotle himself, the prince of logicians, admits, "That it is altogether impossible that every thing should be susceptible of demonstration; otherwise the process would extend to infinity, and after all our labour, nothing would be gained."†

Cicero says, "That unless there were some *anticipations* of knowledge in the mind, it would not be inquisitive, or discursive, or attain to any knowledge at all."‡ And this is partly explained by an observation of Cudworth, "That where any new ideas are presented to the mind by sense, it cannot understand or know them, *except by something of its own,*—some active anticipation within itself, that occasionally

certain *communes notitiae* lodged and implanted in the intellect, which serve as a kind of connatural inward stock for the understanding to, work upon, and also as a bias to carry him on to the good of an intellectual life." Page 366.

* Hooker Eccles. Pol. book 1.

† Stewart's Elem. vol. 2.

‡ De Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

reviving and meeting with it, makes it know it, or take acquaintance with it." "And," he adds, "this is the only true sense of that old assertion of Plato, that Knowledge is Reminiscence, not that it is the remembrance of something which the soul had some time before actually known, in a pre-existent state; but because it is the mind's comprehending of things by some inward anticipations of its own, something native and domestic to it, or something actively exerted from within itself."*

Dugald Stewart observes, "The remark is undoubtedly true—that if there were no first principles, or in other words, if a reason could be given for every thing, no process of deduction could possibly be brought to a conclusion." And in reference to this point, he cites D'Alembert, Boyle, and Dr. Campbell, to prove that all the sciences rest ultimately on first principles, which must be taken for granted without proof.†

"All reasoning (says Dr. Reid) is from principles—*the first principles of every kind of reasoning are given us by nature.*—The conclusions of reason are all built upon first principles, and can have no other foundation." Most justly therefore do such principles disdain to be tried by Reason, and laugh at the artillery of the logician when it is directed against them."—And in another place, he adds, "How or when I got such first principles, upon which I build all my

* On Morality, p. 129. See also Hale, p. 43.

† See Elements, vol. 2.

reasoning, I know not; for I had them before I can remember; but I am sure, they are parts of my constitution, and I cannot throw them off."*

Dr. Watts well observes, in reference both to first principles in mathematics and in religion—"That it is the vain affectation of proving every thing, that has led geometricians to form useless and intricate demonstrations to support some theorems, which are sufficiently evident to the eye by inspection, or to the mind by the first mention of them."—"Some things have more need to be *explained* than to be *proved*, as axioms, or self-evident propositions; and indeed all *the first great principles*, the chief and most important doctrines both of *natural and revealed religion*; for, when the sense of them is clearly explained, they appear so evident in the light of nature or Scripture, that they want no other proof."†

"Our perception of this *self-evidence* in any proposition, is called Intelligence. It is our knowledge of those *first principles* of truth, *which are*, as it were, *wrought into the very nature and make of our minds*; they are so evident in themselves to every man who attends to them, that they need no proof. It is the prerogative and peculiar excellence of these propositions, that they can scarce ever be proved or denied."—"These propositions are called axioms, or maxims, or first principles; these are the very foundations of all improved knowledge and reasonings, and on that

* Reid's Inquiry, pp. 136 and 324.

† See Logic, part iv. ch. 2.

account these have been thought to be *innate propositions*, or truths born with us."*

Dr. Beattie asserts, that "All mathematical truth is founded on certain first principles, which common sense, or *instinct*, or the constitution of the human understanding, or the law of rational nature, compels us to believe without proof, whether we will or not." Hence, according to this writer, "there is a power in the mind which perceives elementary truths or first principles, and commands implicit belief, not by progressive argumentation, but by an instantaneous and instinctive impulse; derived neither from education, nor from habit, but from nature;" and he concludes, "that except we believe many things without proof, we never can believe any thing at all; for that all sound reasoning must ultimately rest on principles intuitively certain, or intuitively probable."†

* Logic, part 2. ch. 2. §. 9.

Even Locke himself admits, that "In intuitive knowledge consists the evidence of all those maxims, which nobody has any doubt about, but every man (does not, as is said, only assent to, but) knows to be true, as soon as ever they are proposed to his understanding. In the discovery of, and assent to these Truths, there is no use of the Discursive Faculty, *no need of Reasoning*, but they are known by a superior and higher degree of evidence."—Essay, book 4. ch. 17.

† Beattie on Truth, part 1. ch. 1.

Sect. III.

Of the primary elements of Moral Feeling.

I apprehend the authorities I have last quoted will be deemed sufficient to establish the position that the *elements or first principles of reasoning*, belong essentially to every rational being. And, though it is likely, some use will be made of the preceding conclusions, in our subsequent speculations; yet it is of far more importance to be determined, that the fundamental principles of morality and religion also are deeply laid in the constitution of the human mind. For, as the first only relate to the good and convenience of the present rational life; so the higher and eternal interests of the soul are deeply involved in the last. We are therefore to consider that as we cannot even attain to any *speculative knowledge* without building our reasonings upon certain *rational instincts*, *implanted truths*, *primary elements*, or *first principles*, as they are variously denominated; so we cannot attain to any *practical virtue* without building upon the fundamental principles of morality and religion, which we have reason to think are laid originally in the mind by the great Author of our being. In what manner such original elements of truth are inscribed, how their roots or seeds are im-

planted, or in what way they are developed, we can never know. But if the concurring testimony of the wisest men can avail any thing to establish a position, we seem justified in drawing the foregoing conclusion. I am, indeed, aware of a notable exception,—that the opinions of Locke and others are opposed to this view of the subject; but these I must leave to be considered hereafter. I may, however, premise, that, from the peculiar nature of the argument, if it be impossible by natural reasoning to arrive at demonstration one way or the other, then, in order to decide the question, we must place authority against authority; and to whatever side the sanction of Holy Scripture more especially leans, the triumph must be awarded.

In reference to the following, and many other quotations, brought forward to illustrate the different parts of this Essay, I take this opportunity of stating my conviction generally, that there is no more certain way of attaining a distinct notion (provided the subject will admit of it) of any moral or speculative Truth, than in looking at it under that variety of aspect, which different minds of acknowledged depth and clearness, will naturally take in describing the same mental phenomena. I have no doubt that more real service would be done to philosophy, if systematic writers would give due credit to those who have preceded them, and candidly avow their obligations; and if they were more disposed to lean to the concurring sentiments of men of enlightened minds, when

these all tend to a given point, than to the single efforts of their own unassisted genius. I know it is often a boast with some that they have spun out every thing in their lucubrations, from their own store, by diligent inspection of their own minds. But, when we consider the liability of all to adopt some favourite hypothesis, and to push it to its utmost limits, this exclusive reliance on their own energies is little to be commended. For, it is too much the practice, for those who feel, or imagine that they are, capable of thinking for themselves in every point, to slight or overlook the conclusions of others, and to give the world their own system as the consummation of the subject; when perhaps, if carefully examined, there would be found but few original ideas, really their own. I do not, at the same time, pledge myself to support *every* opinion in these quotations.

The remark of Lord Bacon is short and apposite. "It cannot be doubted (says he) that a great part of the moral law is too sublime to be reached by the light of nature. Nevertheless, it is most truly declared, that even from the light and law of nature men receive some knowledge of virtue and vice, right and wrong, good and evil. It must, however, be stated that the light of nature is to be taken in a two-fold signification. In the first place, as it arises from sense, induction, reason, argumentation, according to the laws of heaven and earth. Secondly: as it shines upon the human soul by an *internal instinct*, according to the law of conscience: which is, as it were, the

spark and remains, of pristine and primitive purity. In this latter sense, especially, the soul is a partaker of such a portion of light, as enables it to behold and discover the perfection of the moral law; yet this light is not sufficiently clear, but is afforded in such a manner that it rather reproves for vice, than fully informs us of our duties. Wherefore, the doctrine of Religion, as well moral as mystical, is not to be attained but by inspiration and revelation from God."*

Sir Matthew Hale testifies, that "Whatever may be said of other matters, certainly, the first draughts and strictures of natural religion and morality *are naturally in the mind*:"—"and by his faculties man is rendered into a capacity of knowing the will of Almighty God, and what is acceptable to him; for it is in a great measure *inscribed in his soul.*" This eminent man "appeals to the most knowing men in the world, who have but had the leisure to think seriously and converse with themselves;—whether next under Divine revelation their best and clearest sentiments of morality at least have not been gathered from the due animadversion and inspection of their own minds, and the improving of that *stock of morals* that they there find, and the transcribing of that *original* which they found *first written there.*"†

It is remarked, by the profound Bishop Butler, "that nothing can be more evident, than that, exclusive of revelation, man cannot be considered as a creature left by his Maker to act at random;—but

* Advancem. of Learning. † Prim. Orig. of Man.

that from his make, condition, or nature, he is in the strictest and most proper sense *a law to himself.*—He hath the rule of right within; what is wanting is only that he honestly attend to it."—"Let any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, ask himself, is this I am going about right, or is it wrong? Is it good, or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt, but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue, by almost any fair man in almost any circumstance."*

"The soul," says Dr. Cudworth, "is not a mere Rasa Tabula, a naked and passive thing, which has no innate furniture or activity of its own, nor any thing at all in it, but what was impressed upon it without; for if it were so, then there could not possibly be any such thing as moral good and evil, just and unjust. The anticipations of morality do not spring merely from notional ideas, or from certain rules or propositions, *arbitrarily* printed upon the soul as upon a book, but from some other more inward, and vital principle, in intellectual beings, as such, whereby they have a *natural determination* in them to do some things, and to avoid others; which could not be if they were mere naked passive things."†

Dr. Hutcheson remarks, that "The Author of Nature has much better furnished us for a virtuous conduct, than our moralists seem to imagine, *by*

* See Sermons on Human Nature, ii. & iii.

† Eternal and Immut. Morality. ch. 6.

almost as quick and powerful instructions, as we have for the preservation of our bodies. He has given us strong affections to be the springs of each virtuous action."—He also adds, "The perception of moral good is not derived from custom, education, example or study.....We are not to imagine, that this Moral Sense, more than the other senses, supposes any innate ideas, knowledge, or practical proposition: we mean by it only a determination of our minds to receive the simple ideas of approbation or condemnation, from actions observed, antecedent to any opinions of advantage or loss to redound to ourselves from them."—"Notwithstanding the mighty *Reason* we boast of above other animals, its processes are too slow, too full of doubt and hesitation, to serve us in every exigency, either for our own preservation, without the *external senses*, or to influence our actions for the *good* of the *whole*, without this moral sense."—"The universality of it and that it is antecedent to instruction, may appear from observing the sentiments of children, upon hearing the stories with which they are commonly entertained as soon as they understand language."—In conclusion, Dr. Hutcheson queries that if according to many of our moralists, the ultimate end is to each one *his own happiness;* and yet this he seeks by *Instinct:* "may not another *Instinct* toward the *public* or the *good* of *others*, be as proper a principle of *virtue*, as the *Instinct* towards *private happiness?*"*

* See Inquiry concerning Moral Good and Evil.

"Happily for the human race," says Dr. Rush, "the intimations of duty and the road to happiness are not left to the slow operations or doubtful inductions of Reason..... It is worthy of notice, that while *second* thoughts are best in matters of judgment, *first* thoughts are always to be preferred in matters that relate to morality. *Second* thoughts in these cases are generally parlies between duty and corrupted inclinations. Hence, Rousseau has justly said, that "a well regulated *moral instinct* is the surest guide to happiness."*

Dr. Reid states, "That there must be in morals as in all other sciences, first or self-evident principles, on which all moral reasoning, as to whether the conduct of moral agents be good or bad, in a greater or less degree, or indifferent, is grounded, and in which it ultimately rests. Without such principles, we can no more establish any conclusion in morals, than we can build a castle in the air, without any foundation." —The first principles of morals are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty. By it, as an original power of the mind, we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, of merit and demerit, of duty, and moral obligation, &c.—He that will judge of the first principles of morals must consult his moral faculty, when he is calm and dispassionate." —"We shall find that all moral reasonings rest upon one or more first principles of morals, whose truth is immediately perceived without reasoning, by all men come to years of understanding."—"It is a first

* Influence of Physical Causes on the Moral Faculty.

principle in morals, that we ought not to do to another, what we should think wrong to be done to us in like circumstances. If a man is not capable of perceiving this in his cool moments, when he reflects seriously, he is not a moral agent, nor is he capable of being convinced of it by reasoning."*

I am aware that in quoting the opinions of Lord Shaftesbury and Rousseau, either by way of authority or illustration, I may be supposed to favour their general writings. It is therefore incumbent upon me to express my regret, that men, who could take so interesting and just a view of human nature, in many particulars, as may be noticed in several parts of their respective works, should have been betrayed into any impotent attacks against the sacred and impregnable bulwarks of Revealed Truth. The author of the "Characteristics" was perhaps the most consistent, and sincere, yet withal too frequently vapid in his reasonings, and given to unbecoming levity on serious subjects. But Rousseau, while, at one time, he wrote as if his mind was deeply embued with virtue from the streams of Inspiration itself, at another, he displayed the depravity and weakness of the libertine and unbeliever. We cannot, therefore, regard the acknowledgments which have fallen from such men, but as the unconstrained testimony of the human mind on the side of virtue, or the spontaneous homage which is paid by all men in their cool and

* Essays on the Powers of the Human Mind, vol. 3. ch. 6.

and serious moments, to the universal and immutable light of Truth.

Rousseau thus forcibly expresses himself. "Cast your eyes over all the nations of the world, survey all their histories; among so many absurd and inhuman forms of worship, among such a prodigious diversity of manners and of character, you will find every where the same ideas of justice and probity, every where the same notions of good and evil."—"There is therefore in the bottom of our souls an innate principle of justice and of virtue, by which, in spite of our peculiar maxims, we judge our own actions and those of others to be good or evil." In another place he justly says, "I know not for what reason men would attribute to the progress of philosophy the beautiful morality of our books; this morality, drawn from the Gospel, belonged to Christianity before it did to philosophy. The precepts of Plato are often very sublime; but how frequently does he err, and to what extent do his errors not reach? As to Cicero, can we believe, that, without Plato, this rhetorician would have discovered his duties? The Gospel alone, as to its morality, is always certain, always true, always perfect, and always consistent with itself."*

"Sense of *right* and *wrong*," according to Shaftesbury, "being as natural to us as *natural affection* itself, and being a *first principle in our constitution and make*; there is no speculative opinion, persuasion, or belief, which is capable immediately or directly to

* Pensées de Rousseau.

exclude or destroy it. That which is of original and pure nature nothing beside contrary habit and custom (a *second nature*) is able to displace. And this affection being an original one of earliest rise in the soul: —It's impossible that this can *instantly*, or without much force and violence, be effaced, or struck out of the natural temper, even by means of the most extravagant belief in the world."*

There appears to me to be great propriety in the following remarks from Dr. Beattie. "Truth is something fixed and determinate, depending not upon man, but upon the Author of Nature. The fundamental principles of truth must therefore rest upon their own evidence, perceived intuitively by the understanding."

"Why should not our judgments concerning Truth be acknowledged to result from a *bias* impressed upon the mind by its Creator, as well as our desire of self-preservation, our love of society, &c.? If those judgments be not *instinctive*, I should be glad to know how they come to be universal:—If those judgments be not *instinctive*, I should be glad to know how men find it so difficult, or rather impossible to lay them aside."†—"Morality is founded on certain first principles."—"I do not say," observes Beattie in another place, "that any particular moral principle is *innate*, or that an infant brings it into the world with him: this would be as absurd as to say that an infant

* Characteristics, vol. 2.

† Beattie on Truth, part. 2. ch. 2.

brings the multiplication table into the world with him. But, I say that the moral faculty which dictates moral principles, and the intellectual faculty which ascertains proportions of quantity and number, are original parts of man's nature; which, though they appear not at his birth, nor for some time after, even as the ear of corn is not seen till long after the blade is sprung up, fail not, however, provided outward circumstances be favourable, to disclose themselves in due season."*

* Beattie, Elements of Moral Science, part, 3. ch. 2.

CHAP. III.

ON THE SYSTEM OF LOCKE.

Before I enter further into this subject, it may be proper to take a very general view of the fundamental principles in the system of Locke, as they are laid down in his Essay on Human Understanding. A work so celebrated, the first appearance of which might be said to form an era in the philosophy of the human mind, ought of necessity to claim our serious attention. But, independently of his work, and the great original genius of its author, the virtues of the man, and the piety of the Christian, are entitled to unqualified respect. That he accomplished much, is acknowledged by those who impugned his arguments; and that his system has many defects is admitted even by his friends. It is not, however, my object, neither is it my place, even if I were so qualified, to set forth his merits, or to expose his faults. But, as it will be necessary to make frequent reference to his principles, and as the consideration of them is intimately con-

nected with the present argument, a short previous notice seemed indispensable. In the course of my speculations I shall pass no farther comments upon them than a desire to discover truth, wherever it can be found, and sincere conviction, may seem both to justify and to require. Yet I shall always endeavour to strengthen my own views by concurring opinions, rather than to exhibit them alone unsupported by authority; more especially when opposed to so grave an authority as that of Locke.

I must here, however, forewarn my reader, that, in entering upon some of the following speculations, with no other guide than human reason to direct, he will have to launch with me into a sea of unfathomable depth, clouded with more or less metaphysical obscurity, in which few real discoveries have yet been made by the unassisted light of nature. Yet, although we may have to steer our course by this feeble light, and may frequently be involved in perplexities and doubts in consequence, I am not without hope, that by keeping a constant eye to a better guide, we shall be enabled to make our way through conflicting tides of opinion, to escape from the darkness and uncertainty of outward speculation, and to discover a polar star, that will give us clear and steady light, and lead us at last to the haven of Truth.

Locke endeavours to show, that the human mind in its natural or ordinary state, has received no impressions originally from its Maker, and is therefore destitute of every kind of innate principle. Hence he

compares it to "a white sheet of paper,"—"an empty cabinet,"—and "a dark room." He considers that the only objects it contemplates are what he calls its Ideas: and that these are either received from without by the senses; or the mind, by exercising its faculties in reflecting on these materials, forms new conceptions, and thus acquires by experience all its knowledge. He argues, that as it has no innate ideas,—no instinctive rule to distinguish truth from falsehood; so it can have "no innate practical principles," but is moral or immoral by education, depraved or virtuous entirely by custom, having no greater tendency, naturally, to good than to evil; to approve what is honest, benevolent, or disinterested, than the contrary, farther than what is virtuous is found to be profitable to society; consequently, that the ideas of a Supreme Being, of moral and religious obligation, and of virtue and vice, are all acquired. Hence he infers, that man, either by process of argumentation, has discovered these Truths: or, where they have been above human research, that they have been made known by Revelation in the written letter of Scripture; nothing, in fact, having been inscribed on the table of the heart by the Creator. For, as Reason or outward research affords the only natural light, and as there are many things which it cannot know, by all its labour, some revelation from above was necessary to man: therefore, that the volume of Holy Scripture supplies that necessity, and now constitutes the common measure and extent of that reve-

lation: consequently, that our duties can only be known by the laboured deductions of Reason on the one hand, or the Inspired Writings on the other; and, mediately, by outward instruction.

The following passages, in the writer's own words, will explain the matter more fully. "I doubt not but to shew that a man, by the right use of his natural abilities, may, without any innate principles, attain the knowledge of a God, and other things that concern him—and may arrive at certainty without any such original notions or principles."*

"Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this, I answer, in one word, from Experience: in that, all our knowledge is founded: and from that it ultimately derives itself." Book 2. Ch. i.

"Methinks, the understanding is not much unlike a closet wholly shut from light with only some little opening left to let in external visible resemblances, or ideas of things without," Book 2. Ch. xii.—"The great source of most of the ideas we have, depending wholly upon our senses, and derived by them to the understanding, I call Sensation. The other fountain from which experience furnisheth the understanding with ideas, is the perception of the operations of our own minds within us, as it is employed about the ideas it has got—I call this Reflection." "These two

* See Essay, Book 1. Ch. iv.

are to me the only originals from whence all our ideas take their beginnings."—"The understanding seems to me not to have the least glimmering of any ideas, which it doth not receive from one of these two. External objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities—*i. e.* The senses at first let in particular ideas and furnish the yet empty cabinet."—"And the mind furnishes the understanding with the ideas of its own operations." Book 2. Ch. i.—"For white paper receives any characters." Book 1. Ch. iii.

And again, with regard to moral duties, he says, "I doubt not, but, without being written on their hearts, many men may, *by the same way that they come to the knowledge of other things*, come to assent to several moral rules, and be convinced of their obligations; others also may come to be of the same mind, from their education, company, and customs of their country; which *persuasion*, however got, will serve to set Conscience on work."

"If conscience be a proof of innate principles, contraries may be innate principles; since some men, with the same bent of conscience, prosecute what others avoid." Book 1. Ch. iii.

From this system it follows, according to the same writer, that "*Conscience* is nothing else but our own opinion or judgment, of the moral rectitude or pravity of our actions;"—that "*Virtue* is approved, not because it is *innate*, but because it is *profitable*;"—that "*Good* and *Evil* are nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to

us;"—that "*Truth* signifies nothing but the joining or separating of signs, as the things signified by them, do agree or disagree with one another: the joining or separating of signs being what is called a *proposition*;"—that "*Light, true Light* in the mind, is or can be nothing else but the evidence of the truth of any *proposition*;"—that "*Faith* is nothing but a firm assent of the mind to the truth of any *proposition*;"—and that "*Reason* must be our last judge and guide in every thing."* These are Locke's definitions and opinions in his own words.

Now, I think it may easily be seen, that this System, considered as a whole, is united in its parts; and, that it gives a very plain, what if I say, mechanical view of the human intellect, and of the mode and materials of its instruction or enlargement.

It omits all notice of instincts, inherent determinations, impulses, and innate principles, speculative or moral.

A few remarks, however, by way of explanation or previous information, are all that I can now with propriety offer. The system of Locke is too comprehensive; his reasonings too profound and connected, and my own ability, and the space I have to allow myself, too limited, to permit me to say much on the subject, if any thing, in so small a compass, that will be likely to prove either satisfactory to myself or to my reader. Yet the little I offer, will, I trust, be fully corroborated. As I proceed in this inquiry, I

* See Essay on Human Understanding.

flatter myself that suitable opportunities will be afforded, to explain my views of the tendency of some of his principles more fully.

I am, notwithstanding, desirous of abating somewhat of the influence which such an author must possess, and of showing, *in limine*, that his reasonings are far from being considered by many eminent writers as entitled to implicit credit; so that, if I differ with him in some important points, I do not differ alone. It is for this reason that I adduce the testimonies at the end of this Chapter. But if there did not appear to be a stronger sanction than even human authority in support of the view I take, I should hardly venture to hint at opposition.

It will appear from the preceding extracts, that Locke considers Experience to be the only foundation of all our knowledge; that Sensation furnishes the mind with information concerning the qualities of outward material objects; and Reflection furnishes the understanding with a knowledge of the mind's own operations, by means of the different faculties, memory, association, abstraction, imagination, reason, &c.

This is undoubtedly a very simple view of the case; and the clearness and simplicity are rendered still more striking by the comparison of the human understanding, in its unfurnished state, to a dark closet,—an empty cabinet,—a white sheet of paper. It is no wonder, therefore, that a system, built upon such plain intelligible principles, should gratify every one who is

desirous of having clear ideas on a subject that is usually considered to be involved in perplexing obscurity. Many of those terms, also, to which we are used to annex ideas more or less abstract and refined, and to connect them with something of sacred import, as Faith, Light, Truth, Conscience, are stripped of these allusions, and presented to us as things more plain and cognizable by the natural understanding than readers of divine mysteries would imagine. Another principle must also, to many, be highly satisfactory, viz. that "men, *barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have*, without the help of any innate impressions; *and may arrive at certainty*, without any such original notions or principles." Certainty of knowledge is a high human attainment, promised too, to the exercise of the natural faculties.

It is however true, that, notwithstanding the seeming simplicity of its principles, this System requires, in its details, an infinite deal of metaphysical acumen and complicated reasoning, to reconcile to it a very considerable number of mental phenomena—particularly in moral and religious operations, sentiments, and exercises; and to explain satisfactorily the origin of some of our ideas.

In this last attempt even the mighty genius of Locke has failed him in many instances. Locke was unquestionably a profound thinker: and no other system could have been devised which would have given such scope to his natural genius as that he adopted.

For as, conformably to his theory, every idea in the mind was acquired by some intelligible intellectual process; it was incumbent upon him to prove, and he exercises his ingenuity accordingly in showing by what direct or intricate steps he supposes the mind to attain all its most abstract notions. Hence, not only is a very technical and artificial origin assigned to some of our ideas, but a very mechanical notion is given of the mind itself, as to its nature and developement. For, after all the display of simplicity, even if the principles were granted, the manner in which an intelligent Being, dignified also as a moral agent, digests and elaborates the ideas of outward things into art and science, morality and religion, would be still a mystery as deep and inscrutable as the evolution of a seed into radicle and plume, stem and branch, bud and fruit. This is a living work; and no living work was ever yet comprehended by the human mind. Though this is done by successive stages, it does not follow, that the tendencies are not innate; and although the mental faculties are developed one after another, it does not follow that this developement is effected by human art.

If *Experience* mean process or lapse of time, the proposition, in a qualified sense, may be true, that Experience is the foundation of all our knowledge and all our principles. But if it mean the labour and unassisted energy of the creature, the truth of the assertion may fairly be doubted: because as the growth of a plant proceeds from one degree to another by its

inherent powers, without human assistance (which may, indeed, aid or retard, but cannot give the powers themselves); so in the developement of the mind, the internal seeds, faculties, or talents, may be gradually unfolded, by native tendencies or principles of thought and action, which, if they may not be strictly called *innate*, are, nevertheless, not *introduced*, though they may be *excited from without*:—And this is something more than a barren metaphysical distinction.

The question is not whether a great and profound genius such as Locke, might attain to certain knowledge, by what he calls the right use of his natural faculties; for, such a capacity might only be granted to one in a million: but, whether the human mind is furnished by its Maker with those simple intelligible principles of right and wrong, true and false, which will enable the million, however simple, wayfaring and illiterate, by the common or ordinary use of the talents committed to them, to think and act like rational beings, to comprehend their duties to God and man, and by obedience to perform them.

When we consider the origin which Locke has assigned to the principles of human knowledge in general, we cannot wonder that his theory of moral truth should follow the fate of his theory of every other kind of truth. Speculative maxims and practical principles are however essentially different: and though men may not be born with the former, yet it is going far to say that the human mind is not naturally endowed with any of the latter. For an

outward source of moral truth to a moral agent, would plainly be more serious in its effects than an outward source of speculative truth. That a being who is only accountable to his Maker should be sent into the world with no one internal principle to instruct him in a single act of conduct that would be agreeable in the sight of God, but wholly dependent on the deductions of his own reason and experience, or on the casual instruction that might be thrown in his way by others of the same race, is surely not according to the theory of morals which we are taught by Divine Revelation.

Locke seems to me to take it for granted, that unless every intimation of duty, measure of light, degree of evidence, manifestation of truth, in the mind, can be reduced to the form of a proposition, it can have no practical effect. This does not seem to be the opinion of others: and it surely must be admitted that various practical principles seem to operate, as in the lower animals, without any corresponding propositions of truth being objectively in their minds.

Dr. Watts, I observe, takes notice of the concession which Locke has made, 'that there are such things as innate practical principles—viz. the desire of happiness, and aversion to misery;' and he says that the mind "contains in it the plain and general principles of morality, *not explicitly as propositions, but only as native principles by which it judges, and cannot but judge* virtue to be fit, and vice unfit for intelligent and social creatures which God has made."*

* Philosophical Essays.

Although therefore the tendency of Locke's reasoning is to prove that there are no innate principles, either speculative or practical; yet he admits of one exception, and is led to confess that "Nature has put into man a desire of happiness, and an aversion to misery; and that *these, indeed, are innate practical principles,* which do continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions, without ceasing." But, he observes, "these are inclinations of the appetite to good, not impressions of truth on the understanding." And he adds, "I deny not, that there are *natural tendencies* imprinted on the minds of men; and that from the very first instances of sense and perception, there are some things that are grateful, and others unwelcome to them; some things that they incline to, and others that they fly:" He concludes, however, "this makes nothing for innate characters on the mind, which are to be the principles of knowledge, regulating our practice."*

With great deference, I think it may be presumed that if the comprehensive word Happiness were resolved into the pursuit and possession of the various objects at which different individuals aim, and into the various principles put in action to attain it, perhaps it would include more of original native impulses than might have been contemplated in the proposition. Some place it in one thing, some in another. Happiness may be something that is remote, or that is immediate. It may refer to moral as well

* Book I. Ch. 3.

as to natural gratifications. It may include the objects of our appetites, our desires, and our affections, as also of our higher and nobler principles.

Locke, however, has not given it this latitude of meaning, but plainly implies in the expression, implanted desire of happiness, "an inclination of the appetite to good," that is, sensual gratification.

But, leaving appetites, if we come to imprinted tendencies, desires, and affections, it must be confessed, that these do often urge to action, as practical principles, without the medium of propositions or acquired knowledge. For, implanted tendencies are plainly in the stead of knowledge, and imparted, through defect of knowledge, for ends which are as fully, if not better answered when the mind is prompted by an original native impulse, than when it is directed by an impression of truth in the understanding. All the *natural impulses* of the mind, whatever they be, stand us in stead of impressions of truth in the understanding, that is, instead of formal propositions. They supply the deficiencies of Reason. The only difference is, that the source from which they spring is a higher wisdom than our own: and the consequence is, that the design is more perfectly accomplished. But when the mind is actuated by a *moral impulse*, consequently under the influence of a higher wisdom than its own, does it follow, that in every such case, there should be a formal proposition in the understanding? The Beaver and the Bee are impelled to action, not by impressions of truth on the

understanding, not by acquired principles of knowledge; but by native practical principles, which urge them as determinately, as man is urged by the innate desire of happiness.

It would seem therefore to be a fundamental error in philosophy to assume that an intelligent being cannot be led or directed to what is good, unless by the influence of some speculative maxim or proposition, formally present in the mind. For it is certain that the instinctive actions in men and brutes, which concern the welfare of the body, are not directed by this kind of influence;—the power which urges them to act not being an acquired notion but an original law, the nature and design of which they cannot often see. And it is not an unfair supposition, (for as much as the analogy is good,) that the highest interests of man should be influenced or directed *primarily* by instinctive impulses; without the medium of formal impressions of truth on the understanding. It is not more difficult to conceive an original inclination of the mind to its *highest good*, subject nevertheless to the power which it has of abuse, than an original inclination of the appetite to its *lowest or sensual good*, subject to the very same power. Neither is it more difficult to conceive that there should be instinctive or inbred determinations to think and act after a certain rule as *rational* and *moral* agents, than that there should be such determinations to act after a certain rule as *irrational* or *animal* agents. But, in the latter case, it is incontrovertibly true, that the prin-

ciples of action are *innate*—as in animal instincts:—they are certainly not acquired by experience, yet they are practical principles, involving in some cases high degrees of geometrical knowledge and exquisite art;—they are true practical principles without any propositions of truth formally objective in the mind. Why then, it may be asked, may not human beings act both as rational and moral creatures, without formal propositions of truth in their understandings, simply from natural and constitutional determinations, to reason according to certain universal rules of speculative truth, or to act according to certain universal principles of *right and wrong*? The only difference is that man may pervert his reason; and may choose evil instead of good. In other words, he is not bound by his constitution always to reason absurdly or the contrary; nor to act always virtuously or wickedly. But his Maker hath shewn him what is good; consequently what is evil. And he is formed constitutionally to distinguish truth from falsehood; for if his rational principles do not unfold themselves in due time and order, as in his neighbours, he is not fit for human society. It is impossible to conceive that any human being, as man, whether in civilized or savage society, sound in heart and mind, can be altogether ignorant of the relations of true and false, and right and wrong.

It will appear, to some, singular enough, that this eminent writer, by adopting the notion, which may well be called paradoxical, that the mind does not

perceive external objects themselves, but only the idea, image or representation of those objects, in some unaccountable way brought before it, should have helped to lay the foundation for the scepticism of Hume and Berkley, with regard to the existence of a material world. This however is the fact: and, in so far, this Ideal System, as it has been termed, has led some of its followers to adopt conclusions revolting to the common sense of mankind.

Des Cartes, Malebranche, and Locke attempted to prove, what needed no proof by argument, the existence of a material world. Yet it appears, according to Dr. Reid, that "these three great men with the best good will, have not been able, (upon their own principles) from all the treasures of Philosophy, to draw one argument that is fit to convince a man that can reason, of the existence of any one thing without him." "Neither Des Cartes nor Locke perceived the consequences of their system concerning ideas. Bishop Berkley was the first who discovered it." "Thus we see that Des Cartes and Locke take the road that leads to scepticism, without knowing the end of it; but they stop short for want of light to carry them farther. Berkley frighted at the appearance of the dreadful abyss, starts aside and avoids it. But the author of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, (David Hume) more daring and intrepid, without turning aside to the right hand or the left, like Virgil's Alecto, shoots directly into the gulf." For, the last

* See Inquiry into the Human Mind.

argued, upon Locke's principles, not only against the existence of matter, but of mind or spirit, and held that *Ideas* were the only things existing in the Universe! To such a degree will the human mind suffer itself to be bewildered when it leaves the simple instructions of Nature and Revelation!

After alluding to some of the advantages which resulted to Science from the publication of Locke's Essay, Dugald Stewart remarks, that "with these great merits, his work has capital defects; and, perhaps, in no part of it are these defects more important, than in the attempt he has made to deduce the origin of our knowledge entirely from Sensation and Reflexion. These, according to him are the sources of all our simple ideas; and the only power that the mind possesses, is to perform certain operations in the way of Composition, Abstraction, Generalization, Comparison, &c. on the materials which it thus collects in the course of its experience." "This system led Mr. Locke to some dangerous opinions, concerning the nature of *moral distinctions;* which he seems to have considered as the offspring of education and fashion.* Stewart adds, that "the late learned Mr. Harris in particular frequently mentions this doctrine of Locke, and always in terms of high indignation."

Dr. Beattie says that "nothing was further from the intention of Locke, than to encourage verbal controversy, or advance doctrines favourable to scep-

* Outlines of Moral Phil. sect. 6. See also Elements of Philosophy, chap. 1. sect. 4.

ticism. To do good to mankind, by enforcing virtue, illustrating truth, and vindicating liberty, was his sincere purpose: and he did not labour in vain. But candour obliges me to remark, that some of his tenets seem to be too rashly admitted, for the sake of a favourite hypothesis. That some of them have promoted scepticism is undeniable. He seems, indeed to have been sensible that there were inaccurracies in his work."—"The first book of his Essay, which with submission, I think the worst, tends to establish this dangerous doctrine, that the human mind, previous to education and habit, is as susceptible of any one impression as of any other: a doctrine which if true, would go near to prove that truth and virtue are no better than human contrivances;* or at least that they have nothing permanent in their nature, but may be as changeable as the inclinations and capacities of men. Surely this is not the doctrine that Locke meant to establish; but his zeal against innate ideas, and innate principles, put him off his guard, and made him allow too little to *instinct* for fear of allowing too much.*

"Sensation and Reflexion," in the words of Dr. Price, "have been commonly reckoned the sources of all our ideas; and Mr. Locke has taken no small

* Essay on Truth, part 2, chap. 2, p. 137.

Beattie adds, "Locke's discourse against innate ideas and principles, is too metaphysical. Some of his notions on that subject are, I believe, right; but he has not explained them with his wonted precision; and most of his arguments are founded in an ambiguous acceptation of the words *idea* and *innate*."†

† Essay on Truth, part 3 chap. 2, p. 247.

pains to prove this. How much, soever, on the whole, I admire his excellent Essay, I cannot think him sufficiently clear or explicit on this head."* "Nor does there seem to be any thing necessary to convince a person, that all our ideas are *not* deducible from sensation and reflexion—except taken in a very large and comprehensive sense, besides considering, how Mr. Locke derives from them our *moral ideas*." "It is undoubted that this great man would have detested the consequences (deducible from this system); and, indeed it is sufficiently evident, that he was strangely embarrassed, and inconsistent in his notions on this, as well as some other subjects."†

In regard to the question of a moral faculty, on which he dissents from Locke, Dr. Rush modestly states; "The only apology I shall make for presuming to differ from that justly celebrated oracle Mr. Locke (who has confounded the moral principle with Reason) shall be, that the eagle-eye of Genius often darts its views beyond the notice of facts, which are accommodated to the slender organs of perception of men, who possess no other talent than that of observation."‡

* Review of the principal questions in Morals, by Dr. Price, p. 18.

† Ibid. p. 63.

‡ See Influence of physical causes on the Moral Faculty.

Bishop Berkley observes that "if any one were able to introduce the general idea of a triangle into the mind, it would be the author of the Essay on Human Understanding. He who has so far distinguished himself from the generality of writers by the clearness and significancy of what he says. But that it is made up of manifest staring contradic-

It will be generally admitted that Dr. Watts was distinguished for exemplary moderation in all that he wrote on controversial subjects. This candid and judicious author states—"There has been a great controversy about the *origin of ideas*, namely, whether any of our ideas are *innate or no*, that is, born with us, and naturally belonging to our minds. Mr. Locke utterly denies it; others as positively affirm it." Dr. Watts implies that "the controversy may be compromised, by allowing that there is a sense, wherein our first ideas of some things may be said to be *innate*;"—and he adds, "though Mr. Locke supposes sensation and reflexion to be the only two springs of all ideas; yet *abstraction* is certainly a different act of the mind. Nor can I think Mr. Locke himself would deny my representation of the original of abstracted ideas, nor forbid them to stand for a distinct species."*.

In his philosophical Essays Dr. Watts thus expresses himself, "There are many admirable chapters in the Essay of Human Understanding, and many truths in them, which are worthy of letters of gold. But there are some opinions in his philosophy especially relating to intelligent beings, their powers and operations, which have not gained my assent."..."His writings relating to Christianity have some excellent

tions." He adds, "That a man who thought so much, and laid so great stress on clear and determinate ideas, should nevertheless talk at this rate, seems very surprising." New Theory of Vision.

* See Logic, part 1, chap. 3, sect. 1.

thoughts in them, *though I fear he has sunk some of the divine themes and glories of that dispensation too much below their original design.*"*

In reference to the last remark I may add, that amongst thinking men, the most ready and effectual way to acquire the submission of Faith has generally been by a smooth and easy passage from the outworks of Reason. If Faith imposes nothing more than what may be ingeniously reconciled to the outward views of Reason, the assent of the latter is easily gained; but when many difficulties are started, and a formidable barrier is thus raised between them, the contest is long and arduous; even miracles themselves are slighted, and the strong hold of Reason seldom is abandoned. On the other hand, if "the wise and prudent of this world" can please themselves with the notion that what are mysteries to the common mass are brought down to their *own* comprehension; *and mountains are removed and crooked things made straight — by their Reason not their Faith*;—then Reason and Revelation are said to go hand in hand; and the natural pride of the human understanding is made to agree (if it be possible for it to agree) with the simplicity and meekness of Revealed Truth.

A system, therefore, like that of Locke, which attempts to exalt the human mind to an adequate comprehension of divine mysteries, and to *bring them down*, as it were, to its own level, must needs have

* Philosophical Essays by Dr. Watts.

ready access to the closet of the *speculative* Christian. If Reason is rightly proclaimed to be "our last judge and guide in every thing," whatever there be of faith and doctrine and mystery, difficult to be understood, must undergo narrow scrutiny; and they who know how jealously Reason maintains its authority against every thing short of formal demonstration, will be at no loss to determine how such difficulties are likely to be settled. We must indeed admit, that, seeing mankind are prone to extremes, and the best things liable to abuse, therefore a check ought to be devised, by which extravagance and error may be prevented. It must also be admitted, that the system of Locke is well calculated to repress the wildness of enthusiasm; and at the time he wrote, there were many pretenders to divine illumination. But it is equally clear, that what checks exuberance may also check the kindly growth of what is good. And there is cause to fear that some of Locke's principles have had the latter effect. He that plucks up the *tares* should take heed that he root not up the *grain* likewise.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE ANALOGY BETWEEN MENTAL PRINCIPLES AND SEEDS, AND BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

SECT. I.

Of the Analogy between mental Principles and Seeds.

WE have now taken a review of several important testimonies, in favour of some universal law or light of truth, existing in the mind antecedently to outward observation, and leading mankind—the wise and unwise—to certain general opinions—with regard to the existence of a supreme Being, the obligation and excellence of virtue in its various forms, and the sacred rights and supremacy of conscience. For we cannot conceive any human society to subsist, without some impressions more or less distinct, of these primary and essential truths.

We have also taken notice of the opinion very generally entertained by philosophers, that even speculative truth itself, of every description, is founded upon some first principles or intuitive axioms, incapable of proof, and yet, by the constitution of our

nature, commanding implicit assent. And it seemed to follow, as a necessary consequence, that moral truth, likewise, should be built upon some original principle in the mind. From such small beginnings, therefore, it was to be presumed, the greatest stretch of intellect, and the highest degree of moral excellence, took their rise.

A question therefore naturally presents itself, whether these Elements of Reason and of Moral Feeling —if they may be so denominated—constitute part of the original fabric of the mind, or only bear such a relation to it, as a cargo of merchandize does to a ship, or an assortment of jewels to a cabinet.

We have partially reviewed the leading principles of Locke's system, and, if we may judge from his comparisons, the latter must have been his opinion. We have seen, notwithstanding, that very grave authorities are opposed to this eminent writer; and it will be proper to enter into a brief discussion, on the developement of the mental faculties; without which developement, it is to be presumed, the understanding can neither be cultivated, nor embued with knowledge. For, the developement is one thing, and the cultivation another. A limb may grow, and a branch may shoot out; the former without being properly exercised, and the latter without being properly trained.

It seems, therefore, to be of importance that we should inquire whether the mind has any analogy to the other works of divine Providence, or stands alone

and distinct, in its affinities, propensities and development, from every other object of the Lord's Creation. I believe, we shall find, although we cannot pretend to know any thing of its real essence, that, in its constitution, faculties and endowments, whether these be natural or acquired, it still holds a near and beautiful relation to the objects with which we are surrounded.

I conclude, therefore, that a suitable object of comparison, will help us to form as clear a notion of the matter as the nature of things will admit. But as to the question whether the mind be purely immaterial, or be absolutely depending on material organs to execute its functions, the analogy I allude to, will be equally applicable.

It seems, therefore, to be perfectly consistent with the phenomena, to consider the mind in its original state, as a living principle possessed of inherent powers, or *germs* of thought and feeling, each of them capable of astonishing enlargement. And these are precisely the properties we ascribe to a germ or seed. The mode in which the mind is at first enabled to apprehend the most simple truths, or elements of knowledge, and afterwards by slow degrees to enlarge its comprehension, so as to take in systems; as well as the order in which its powers are gradually unfolded; afford the clearest illustration of this analogy, as well as substantial evidence that it is not, in its nature, whatever that may be, of the same capacity or *dimensions*, (if the term may be allowed,) *origin-*

ally, as it is when brought to maturity. But what applies to the mind as a whole, applies to its several faculties, in particular. The brain is an organ, of whose functions we know little more than this, that it is subservient to the operations of mind. How far its different parts belong to different mental capacities and propensities, is a theory yet in its infancy. That there is some natural connexion is highly probable; and illustrations from Comparative Anatomy may be fairly brought forward in support of such a theory. But, our business on the present occasion is with it as a whole: and so far as its developement is connected with the production of *thought*, it is a structure *unique* in the creation. Yet we cannot doubt that it follows the analogy observable in nature. The brain, however, is only part of a system, not the whole. This is not the case with a *seed*.

But of the internal organized structure—the original vital energies of a living seed, we know nothing. Or, if we rise from a vegetable to an animal similitude, we may compare the mind to the *ovum*. The rudiments of life and the lineaments of organized structure, observable in the embryo, are analogous to the undeveloped characters of the mind; and the members of the body are analogous to the various faculties. But as the body is one and distinct, united in every part by common sympathies, though there are many functions; so also is the mind. The faculties are only different modifications of mental power; as the outward limbs and organs, some voluntary in

their action, some involuntary, are instruments of physical use, appertaining to the body.*

Something of the same analogy may be traced in a seed; and it might be more correct, and, certainly is more appropriate to the common usage of language, to consider the mind as a receptacle of various seeds, corresponding to the different tendencies, affections, and principles, with which it is naturally endowed.

It may not, indeed, be philosophically correct to speak of seeds in the mind, as the principles from which its actions spring; but if we must compare it with any thing external, the better to understand its operations;—an alternative to which we are compelled to have recourse, in the present limited state of our knowledge,—we should compare it with something that the Creator himself has formed, and not with some mechanical contrivance or composition of human art, such as a *cabinet* or *room*, or a *sheet of paper*. These similes—all of them without life—it must be confessed, are chosen with singular infelicity; as if there was nothing in the whole works of Providence,—nothing in the wide circle of organized

* Dr. Good justly observes that "the *faculties* are to the mind, what organs are to the body. We, sometimes, however, are apt to speak of them as distinct and separate existences from the mind. The faculties of the mind are so many powers; and as powers, are mere attributes of a being or substance, and not the being or substance itself."—"We accustom ourselves to describe the will as being overpowered by the judgment; or the judgment as being overpowered by the imagination; or the mind itself as being carried headlong by the violence of its own passions. By all which, however, we only mean, or should only mean, that the mind does not on such occasions, exert its own faculties in a fitting or sober manner."—Good's Study of Medicine, vol. 3, p. 52.

beings, or of animated nature, that bore a closer analogy to the mind, or afforded an apter similitude; and therefore that something artificial must be resorted to, as the best example, to illustrate the nature and operation of the noblest sublunary work of God, —the human intellect.

Some writers have displayed their eloquence in describing the wonderful constitution of the mind, its faculties, affections, passions, and propensities; but if we take our notions of its capabilities from the similes just noticed, we shall have but a mean idea of its powers, and, I am disposed to think, an erroneous idea of the manner in which they are developed.

I have insisted the more on this point of fixing a proper analogy; because upon it the just conception and clear understanding of the origin of human knowledge seems to depend. It is, indeed, easy enough to conceive how a *white sheet of paper*, or *clear marble tablet*, should be covered with legible characters; or how an *empty cabinet* may be filled with different classes of assorted materials; or a *dark room* may be gradually illuminated with pictures of external things figured upon its walls. But not to mention that only one of the external senses—that of vision—can represent outward objects by a sort of image, and consequently that impressions made upon the other senses cannot be considered as images conveyed to the mind; it is plain that the powers by which these invisible materials of thought are recalled, associated, compared, generalized, separated, and combined, so as to form

truth and knowledge, and the curious vital process by which these wonderful operations are carried on, are entirely overlooked in this theory. So that, after all, it is as difficult to explain how any speculative or moral truth is produced and appropriated, as it was before.

The assimilating powers of the mind, if I may so express myself, are analogous to the assimilating powers of the body, or of a seed; but according to the simile of a dark room, or white sheet of paper, they are absolutely incomprehensible; and the relations to the latter appear quite incongruous. For a seed might as fitly be compared to a dark room, because it has an implanted or original tendency to germinate by the contact of earth and moisture; as the human mind, because it has an innate tendency to expand its powers by the impulse of external things acting on the senses, and awakening the dormant faculties. It is the impulse of external things which excites the living powers of the seed, and of the embryo to develope themselves: and it is the impulse of external things which gives the first occasion to exercise, and calls into activity, the innate energies of the mind.

In explaining this point, I am aware that I am liable to be led into some diffuseness, and perhaps into repetition, from a desire to be perspicuous; but as many of the subsequent reasonings depend upon the view now taken and the explanation here given,

I have to intreat a little indulgence, should this be the case.

After what has been said, therefore, to speak of the mind as a dark room, or *tabula rasa*, can scarcely be thought correct. For, in this state, it must be supposed to be destitute of those living energies, which, though in the strict sense of the terms, they may not be denominated original characters, or *innate ideas*, inscribed by the finger of God, yet are they innate propensities and original determinations to good and to evil—to act and to be acted upon, according to the laws of its constitution.

One could hardly have believed that the human mind, with implanted capabilities far above the most wonderful powers of the brute animals, would have been reduced, as it is by this theory, to a state so much resembling an inanimate substance, as a dark cell ready to receive the images of external things, or white paper on which any ideas might be inscribed. Every one must perceive that it is an active and intelligent principle, complex, and admirable in its make and qualities, containing within itself, as it were, in embryo, what may be termed *susceptibilities*, *capacities*, *sensibilities*, *faculties*, or figuratively, *seeds*, *talents*, *elements*, waiting for expansion and for outward objects on which to exert their native power, and by which to grow to their full developement.

It is impossible, as I before observed, to find words except those borrowed from outward things to de-

scribe the powers of the mind; and therefore we must always use some analogy to express what we mean; and that perhaps will do it imperfectly. But, as a seed, that, with certain inherent properties, only waits the suitable adaptation of outward circumstances, as earth and moisture, and afterwards access to light and air, to answer the intentions of nature, cannot be supposed to have any analogy to a room or a cabinet; so the mind that has more wonderful capacities than a seed, is still farther removed in resemblance from these objects to which it has been compared by the theory in question.

Now, so far as material and visible things may be compared with invisible and immaterial;—and we have no means of knowing the relations of one but by the other;—there appears to be the strictest analogy between the outward natural seed and the internal constitution of the mind. And, indeed, if I may be at liberty to anticipate what will come more in order in another place, we have, in confirmation of this analogy, the very highest authority to which man can appeal, even that of the Divine Founder of Christianity; whose instructions to his hearers were mostly illustrated by some simile or parable, as of a *seed*, a *grain*, a *root*, a *branch*, a *vine*, and that not supposed to be originally formed or planted by man but by his Maker.

According to the outward circumstances in which the mind is placed, it will indeed vary its complexion; but it will still exhibit the grand lineaments of hu-

man nature, as well as the peculiar shades and dispositions which diversify human character: and as we have power by cultivation and change of soil to change the appearance of the plant, so have we power to vary the complexion of the mind. We may train it by wholesome discipline so as to exhibit the fruits of virtue; like the vine planted in a good soil and well watered and skilfully pruned, and removed from all hurtful things: or, we may place it in an ungenial situation, and suffer vice like noxious weeds to spring up and to rob it of all moral beauty, and render it baneful to society. All this we may do with the mind, as we do with the plant. But in all this process, we only check or bring into action powers already existing; and either give them a right direction, or turn them aside from that natural perfection to which they would ultimately tend.

Upon these principles it would be as incorrect to say of a seed planted in the ground, that culture was the foundation of its growth and increase, as to say of the mind that "experience was the foundation of all its knowledge."* The foundation of every thing which has life and living faculties, and has the power to expand itself morally or physically, is the *talent*, *seed*, *rudiment*, or *spark*, formed at first by the Creator, and by Him endowed with inherent tendencies, which no human power can bestow, though it may alter. Now, in the circle of natural operations, there is not a single instance, where we have improvement or

* See Locke.

enlargement of a physical power; that such improvement or enlargement is not effected by addition, or accretion, to some element, seed, or rudiment, *already in existence.* And, I believe it will be found a parallel and universal truth, that there can be no growth—no enlargement—no expansion of intellectual or moral power, which is not also effected by co-operation with, and assimilation or addition to, some original seed, or primary mental principle. Therefore, if the capacity or power, the propensity or instinct, the taste or sense, be not implanted by the Creator, it is in vain that education can make an effort to improve, enlighten, or expand.

"Doctrina *vim* promovet *insitam.*" *Hor.*

In a seed there is a natural tendency to germinate, —in one part to shoot downward, in another to shoot upward, a power to attract and assimilate the surrounding elements, provided they are congenial to it, and to evolve itself by growth into branches and leaves. It has also an inherent tendency to bear fruit in its season, and to multiply its kind, to become torpid in winter, and to flourish again in summer. Now, the great end may be frustrated, and is often frustrated by human art or negligence; but the original tendencies remain the same; and the specific characters of the seed or of the plant, are so defined, that by no human power can they be interchanged.

The seed of a bramble differs essentially from that of a vine; and, to whatever outward circumstances they may be subjected, each preserves its individual and proper character, though the purpose of its creation may not be fully attained. These different tendencies in a seed may be exhibited in succession; but their successive developement does not prove that they are the work of man. In like manner, the capacities and propensities of the mind may some of them be successively developed; yet it is from nature they are derived and not from art. The succession of changes may have been wrought under man's superintendence, as advances are made by education, but the succession of changes does not prove that it is wholly the effect of human power. In every mind are sown the seeds of intellectual and moral excellence, for the world to ripen to perfection or to corrupt. The world gives it none of its capacities or propensities, any more than it gives a brute his instincts or a seed its tendencies: it only affords occasion for their exercise and developement. The world is the soil in which the living principle of the mind is thrown by an all-wise Creator, to be acted upon by outward things, only in proportion as this living principle has been endowed with innate powers or capacities to receive impressions from these outward things.

But these outward things, which thus make impressions upon the senses and upon the internal faculties, may either be qualities of external natural

objects, or qualities of human character and conduct. For, we have principles within us that fit us by nature for intercourse with one another, as well as those which fit us for intercourse with the external world; and as we are capable of receiving pleasure and pain from the latter, so are we capable of receiving pleasure and pain from the former. Without these several excitements, and the due regulation and balance of these excitements, we cannot exercise ourselves to virtue, and attain the perfection of our being. We are prompted by natural feeling to do good to our fellow creature, as we are to do good to ourselves. For there is an instinct or affection of Benevolence; as well as a principle or instinct of Self-love.

Now, impressions of outward things are varied according to the sense, faculty, or power, which is appointed to receive them. And even some human beings are capable of receiving impressions which cannot be made upon others.

Impressions of light and colours are unavailing upon the blind, or of sounds upon the deaf. Impressions of kindness are made in vain upon a soul incapable of love and reciprocal attachment, or of natural beauty on one destitute of taste. Emotions of distress for human suffering cannot be excited in a mind without sympathy, or of grateful feeling in one that has no sensibility. Impressions of physical, mathematical, or speculative truth, however plain and simple and self-evident, cannot possibly be received where there is not an original capacity to comprehend — an

internal eye to perceive relations, proportions, or equalities. And lastly, no impressions as to the loveliness or deformity of moral actions can take effect, where there is not an internal power or instinct to feel the varied and opposite emotions of moral sentiment.

If these positions were not true, brutes might be made to feel and know most of those things which now distinguish and exalt human nature.*

Sect. II.

Of the office and effect of Education compared with Culture.

Let us therefore properly understand the office and effect of education. It cannot be to introduce into the mind notions and relations of things which have

* According to Locke "White paper," (comparing it to the mind), "receives any characters;" but Cudworth appears to have had a clearer notion of the matter, when he said, "If Intellection and Knowledge were mere receptions of extraneous and adventitious forms, then no reason could be given at all *why a mirror or looking-glass should not understand.*"

"If Intellection and Knowledge were a mere passive Perception of the soul from without, and nothing but sense or the result of it, then what Reason could be given, why brute animals, that have all the senses that men have, and some of them more acute, should not have Intellection also, and be as capable of logic, mathematics, and metaphysics, and have the same notions of Morality, of a Deity, and Religion, that men have?"—Treatise concerning Morality, p. 130.

no affinity to its own nature; to pour into it, as into some passive receptacle, *any sort* of ingredients; to which it is to be considered as perfectly indifferent, as though it had no original tastes or predilections. Instead of having *none*, we find that it has *opposite* or contending tastes and predilections. Hence the office and effect of good education upon the mind must be to enlarge innate capacities and feelings essentially its own, to teach them to shoot in a virtuous direction, to convey proper nourishment by placing it in the circle of good example, to defend the opening buds of intellect, sensibility, and moral feeling, from every thing that would harm them;—in a word, to encourage the growth of the good seed planted in every mind, and to prevent the growth of evil propensities, and destroy those noxious principles, which, if allowed to spring up, would debase and deform the character.* For, as good example could never have effect, if there were not good principles in the mind to attract and cherish it; so bad example could not have effect, if there were not evil propensities to lay hold of it and embrace it. There is, therefore, antecedent to all instruction, a principle or seed, an appetite or affection, with instinctive tendencies towards certain external relations in character and in moral conduct, just as there is in the

* "To teach the young Idea to shoot," is a beautiful and apt image; but, surely, no one ever thinks that the Idea so taught is some external representation brought incidentally into the mind. I take it to be the *germ* of *thought* itself.

structure of the eye a congruity to light, or in that of the ear to sounds, long before these organs receive any impressions. Education, therefore, is to the mind, what cultivation is to the plant or seed. It is that methodical training which leads to the gradual evolution and expansion of powers and principles and propensities, connate with the mind, and essential to its constitution. It cannot create new powers; but as a bad education may increase and cherish evil propensities, and produce bad fruit from the growth of evil seed; so a good education may foster virtuous propensities, and produce good fruit from the evolution of good seed.

Whatever, therefore, is received from without, must have a connatural affinity with some primary taste, capacity, or feeling within. For, if it have not this affinity or congruity, it can no more be assimilated and appropriated to the mind's improvement, than light can be perceived by the ear, or musical sounds by the eye. Every Sense has its peculiar and appropriate object or quality in nature; and so has every appetite; and the same may perhaps be said of every passion and emotion.

Every *internal power* has also its object in its external relations; and external impressions can never produce a practical effect further than they quicken, rouse, and animate the internal power to which they are appropriate, and upon which they act. Hence, by communicating or imprinting new thoughts, we only bring into the mind something possessing a close

adaptation in its nature, to the constitution of that inherent faculty to which it is applied, analogous to the nourishment which is conveyed to a plant, and assimilated to its substance. The outward senses, I need not repeat, take cognizance of the qualities of matter; the inward faculties, of intellectual abstractions in physics as well as of moral relations in human conduct. Thus, the eye has a natural affinity for light, the tongue for tastes, and the ear for sounds; and we might as well imagine that discord and harmony, bitter and sweet, odoriferous and putrid effluvia, should make the same impression, prior to experience, or be equally agreeable to their respective organs of sense; as that vice and virtue, right and wrong, truth and falsehood, gratitude and ingratitude, should, when first presented intelligibly to the mind, be indiscriminately and equally acceptable to the internal faculties or principles, which take cognizance of these different relations.

It must be obvious, then, that virtue is naturally lovely and vice hateful,—and it would be idle to set about explaining what these words mean,—in short, that virtuous actions are as universally agreeable, and vicious the contrary, as, to the generality of mankind, sugar is sweet, and gall is bitter. And it is the decree of Heaven and the constitution of human nature which make it so; and which have established these immutable distinctions.

We are compelled, therefore, to conclude, that there must be original affections, dispositions, talents,

—in other words, native seeds, implanted by the Creator, in every mind; without which it might labour in vain upon the imported materials, to fabricate Truth and Science. But, whatever is thus imported must be congenial to its nature, and possess a fitness and congruity. Thoughts and impressions in the mind, acquired by education, are rather *impulses* from without by the Senses, acting on its own inherent energies, than any abstract metaphysical substances, under the name of *ideas*, introduced to its acquaintance.

What can we conceive but that a cold and insensible marble tablet, destitute of every original bias, might just as well receive one impression as another? And surely no reason can be assigned, why, on such a principle, one set of notions could be more congenial to the natural feelings than another; why falsehood should be less acceptable than truth, or gratitude than ingratitude, or vice than virtue; till men should be instructed by experience to give the preference to truth and virtue, as matter of expediency or cold conventional agreement, and not the effect of sacred immutable obligation, or rather of warm original impulse in the mind.

It is undoubtedly true, that certain qualities in human actions, related to the virtues, such as gratitude, generosity, humanity, fidelity, integrity, &c. are embraced and cherished by the affections of man, like the very life-blood by the heart; and the sympathetic

bound of feeling in the mind of almost every human creature, is as responsive to the impulse.

Education, surely, cannot change the original bias or instinct of the human heart so entirely, that the foundation of what we call Virtue, and Innocence, and Gratitude, and Mercy, can be subverted; so that their opposites shall claim unreserved respect in any human society. The human mind is not left so unprovided, even by nature, that it must depend on the learned and experienced to teach it the simplest maxim of moral duty. Discipline, undoubtedly, may do much in fostering the good, and checking the evil tendencies; but it cannot make the choleric man placid and torpid in his sensibilities, nor the cold and deliberate, impetuous and quick of apprehension. It cannot convert a natural genius for one art or science into a genius for another. So that it is absurd to speak of education constituting all the difference we find in human character. Natural and insuperable obstacles are opposed to an equality of talent, or of natural and moral sensibility in our fellow-creatures.

Sect. III.

Illustrations of the same Subject.

I shall now proceed to show, by a few illustrations, that the general view, which I have attempted to lay down, is not entirely a fanciful picture of my own;

but that it has at least the recommendation of being sanctioned by the forms of expression and authority of some eminent writers.

The reader will soon perceive that I do not confine my view to the seeds of moral truth only: and that the words seed, rudiment, and fountain, are severally employed as the original or element from which every kind of truth must spring.

"It is sufficient," says Bishop Butler, speaking of good will in man towards man, "it is sufficient, that the *seeds* of it be implanted in nature by God. There is, it is owned, much left for us to do upon our own heart and temper; to cultivate, to improve, to call it forth, to exercise it in a steady uniform manner. This is our work; this is virtue and religion."*

Though, in the following passage, Hooker may perhaps allude to the *seed of virtue* being planted in the mind by man instead of his Maker; yet the possibility of its growing up to perfection as a plant from its seed, is fully implied in the expression. "The *seed* of whatsoever perfect virtue groweth from us, is a right opinion touching things divine."

It is observed by D'Alembert, as the passage is cited and translated by Stewart, in his Elements, that "Truth in metaphysics resembles truth in matters of taste. In both cases, the *seeds* of it exist in every mind; though few think of attending to this latent treasure, till it be pointed out to them by more curious inquirers."†

* Sermon on Hum. Nat. † Elements of Philosophy, vol. 2.

Lord Bacon uses the metaphorical expression *fountain* instead of *seed;* but he plainly alludes to an original not a factitious source of law. "For there are in nature certain *fountains* of Justice, whence all civil laws are derived, but as streams; and like as waters do take tinctures and tastes from the soils through which they run, so do civil laws vary according to the regions and governments where they are planted, though they proceed from the same fountains."*

Causabon, who is styled by Lord Shaftesbury, "one of the greatest and most learned of moderns," expresses himself to the following effect: "But great men have not transmitted to posterity the precepts and examples of virtue, in order that we may know them for the mere empty purpose of outward gratification of the ears, or the vain boast of useless erudition; but that they might animate us by their labours, to dig up and bring into active usefulness *the seeds* of integrity and virtue; which, as they may have been received from nature, surrounded notwithstanding with vices, and almost overwhelmed, without proper cultivation, continue latent in our minds, like seeds utterly sunk and buried deep in the ground."†

Dr. Johnson remarks, that "nothing is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens, that in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipate,

* Bacon Adv. of Learn. B. 2. † Shaftesbury Character. vol. I.

there is a secret *radical worth*, which may *shoot out* by proper cultivation; that the *spark* of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame."*

Sir Matthew Hale has the following passage:— "I have before said, that the goodness of God had lodged an inward stock in man whereby to improve his intellectual nature, namely, those common notions *(communes notitiae)* of the existence of a God, and that he is to be worshipped, served, and obeyed, the common *root* of Religion in mankind; these are in him like the first *rudiments* of the *Fœtus*, the *Embryo* of religion, or the egg, as it were, out of which it is hatched. The contemplation of the admirable works in the world doth exceedingly fortify and improve those first rudiments of natural Religion, and *digests them* into their just formation."†

The idea suggested in the concluding words of the last author, may perhaps recal some of the remarks recently made on the assimilation of food to the mind. But, I am not acquainted with the writings of any author, who has expressed himself in such frequent allusion, or so decidedly in illustration of the analogy I am supporting as Cudworth.

In opposition to those who, to use his expression, "would make the soul as naked a thing as possible," he contends, that "it is enabled, as occasion serves

* Rambler, No. 70.

† Prim. Orig. Sect. iv. Ch. 8.

and outward objects invite, *gradually and successively to unfold and display itself in a vital manner*, by framing intelligible ideas and conceptions within itself; as the spermatic or plastic power doth virtually contain within itself the forms of all the several organical parts of animals, and displays them gradually and successively, framing an eye here, and an ear there." And he adds, "The primary and immediate objects of intellection and knowledge are not things existing without the mind, but the ideas of the mind itself actively exerted, that is, the intelligible Reasons of things,—which are its own,—and which it *protrudes* from within itself,"—"those things, which," in another place, he says, "are the pure offspring from the mind and *sprout* from the soul itself." "As the intelligible forms by which things are understood or known are not stamps or impressions passively printed upon the soul from without, but *ideas vitally protended* or actively exerted within itself."....The following remarks or corollaries I consider too important to be omitted: "Hence it is also, as experience tells us, that scientifical knowledge is best acquired by the soul's abstraction from the outward objects of sense, and retiring into itself, that so it may the better attend to its own inward notions and ideas. And therefore it is many times observed, that over-much reading and hearing of other men's discourses, though learned and elaborate, doth not only distract the mind, but also debilitates the intellectual powers, and makes the mind passive and sluggish, by calling

it too much outwards. For which cause that wise philosopher Socrates, altogether shunned that Dictating way of Teaching used by the sophisters of that age, and chose rather an Aporetical (doubting or inquisitive) method; because knowledge was not to be poured into the soul like liquor, but rather to be invited and gently drawn forth from it; nor the mind so much to be filled therewith from without, like a vessel, as *to be kindled and awakened.* From hence is that strange parturiency that is often observed in the mind, when it is solicitously set upon the investigation of some truth, whereby it doth endeavour, by ruminating and revolving within itself, as it were, *to conceive it within itself, to bring it forth out of its own womb;* by which it is evident, that the mind is naturally conscious of its own active fecundity, and also that it hath a *criterion* within itself, which will enable it to know when it hath found that which it sought."

"For, the Truths and Essences of Things are not *Dead Things*, like so many statues, images, or pictures hung up somewhere by themselves alone in a world: neither are truths mere sentences and propositions written down with ink upon a book, but they are Living Things, and nothing but modifications of mind or intellect." Treatise on Morality.

Some of the preceding notions of Cudworth may perhaps be quaintly expressed, and may also appear extravagant; and it might not be easy to defend every expression or turn of thought; but the general meaning, which it is not difficult to collect, is to my

mind sufficiently obvious, and will I think be found in unison with the observations of many others.

I observe, indeed, that Stewart* has animadverted strongly upon a passage, quoted from Cudworth and partly sanctioned by Dr. Price, chiefly in reference to abstract ideas, where he says, "*the cognoscitive power of the mind contains in itself virtually (as the future plant or tree is contained in the seed) general notions or exemplars of all things, which are exerted by it, or discover themselves as occasions invite and proper circumstances occur:*" but I confess, that to me it appears, more like an extravagant application of a principle in itself correct, than to be condemned as altogether whimsical.

John le Clerc, one of the most distinguished scholars and critics of his age, observes, in relation to the matter before us, that, "although, accurately speaking, there are no ideas planted in our minds by nature; yet no one can deny that the faculties of our minds are so formed by nature, that as soon as we begin to reason, we may also begin in some measure to distinguish truth from falsehood, and good from evil. For, he adds, the form or image of Truth is always pleasing to us; on the other hand, that of Falsehood is displeasing: Nay more, we prefer virtue to vice, on account of the *seeds planted in us;* which then begin to shoot forth to the light, when we are able to reason; and they become more fruitful the better

* See Elements of Phil. vol. 2, p. 122.

we reason, and the more carefully our minds are disciplined by education."*

Dr. Reid, after stating that there are some powers which nature seems both to have planted and reared, so as to have left nothing to human industry; such as those which are necessary to the preservation of the individual, and the continuance of the kind, observes, that "there are other powers of which Nature hath only *planted the seeds* in our minds, but hath left the rearing of them to human culture."—"The savage hath within him the *seeds* of the logician, the man of taste and breeding, the orator, the statesman, the man of virtue, and the saint; which seeds, though planted in his mind by nature, yet, through want of culture and exercise, must lie for ever buried, and be hardly perceivable by himself or by others."†

Gray has made a corresponding allusion, in a poetical fragment "On the Alliance of Education and Government:"

> "How rude so e'er th' exterior form we find,
> Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,
> *Alike to all, the kind, impartial heav'n*
> *The sparks of truth and happiness has giv'n.*"

I come next to take notice of a few passages to be found in Locke's Treatise on Education. In his Essay on the Understanding, I cannot find a single allusion to the view of the subject we have been considering; as might indeed have been anticipated,

* See Shaftesbury's Charac. vol. 3. † Reid's Inquiry, chap. 1, sect. 2.

from a theory which denies the existence of every innate practical principle, and every thing analogous to it. In his Thoughts on Education, written at a time, when, it would perhaps be unbecoming in me to hint, he might have been less under the influence of theory, he has fallen into the usé of language, *if not so correct*, at least more common and natural, and therefore approaching more nearly to the expressions already quoted from other eminent writers; but how far it favours the view now taken must be left to others to be decided.

In conformity with established usuage, Locke speaks of the "*seeds of vice*" in the mind, "the *roots* of injustice and contention, which are to be carefully *weeded* out,"—"the foundations and fountains of right and wrong, &c. At the same time, I must confess, either that I have been somewhat at a loss to discover his real meaning, or else that there is, at least, the appearance of inconsistency between the language of his Essay, and that in which he has conveyed his unbiassed sentiments on Education.

He seems, in the first place, very clearly to admit orginal diversities of human character, independent of custom or education; and secondly to imply that there are natural principles in the mind, the innate seeds of vice. A third opinion is also to be inferred, that, although we have naturally the seeds of vice, we have *not* naturally the seeds of virtue. If the two first cases be proved, they seem to me to strike at the very foundation of his own theory:—that the mind is

orginally *a blank* which must receive its principles of thought and action from without.

Upon the first point he says, "Some men, *by the unalterable frame of their constitutions*, are stout, others timorous, some confident, others modest, tractable or obstinate, curious or careless, quick or slow. There are not more differences in men's faces, and the outward lineaments of their bodies than there are in the makes and tempers of their minds; only there is this difference, that the distinguishing characters of the face, and the lineaments of the body grow more plain and visible with time and age; *but the peculiar physiognomy of the mind is most discernible in children, before art and cunning have taught them to hide their deformity, and conceal their ill inclinations under a dissembled outside.*"—"God *has stamped certain characters* upon men's minds, which like their shapes, may perhaps be a little mended, but can hardly be totally altered and transformed into the contrary.

"He, therefore, that is about children should observe what their *native stock* is, how it may be improved, and what it is fit for:"—"For, in many cases, all that we can do, or should aim at, is, *to make the best of what nature has given*, to prevent the vices and faults to which such a constitution is most inclined, and give it all the advantages it is capable of.

And again, "There are some men's constitutions of mind and body so vigorous and well framed *by nature*, that they need not much assistance from

others, but by the strength of their *natural genius*, they are from their cradles carried towards what is *excellent*; and by the privilege of their happy constitutions are able to do wonders."*

I conclude that these positions will be universally acknowledged, and that they prove the force of natural or *innate propensities*, whatever may be said about *innate ideas*. For if propensities lead the mind to good or to evil, by some natural impulse, they have the force and influence of innate practical principles, whether these can be conceived in the form of regular propositions or not. It appears clear from Locke that, it is in childhood, "that the peculiar character of the mind most strongly discovers itself," that is, *before* education has exerted any power: but, according to his own principle, the minds of children, prior to education, as being orginally blank paper, should manifest the *least variety*, conformably to what he says afterwards, "that the difference to be found in the manners and abilities of men is owing more to their education than to any thing else." Is there not, here, some appearance of contradiction?

Now, with regard to the second point, that there are principles naturally in the mind, the foundation or seed of vice, there is a little ambiguity in Locke's notions, as I shall endeavour to point out. For we might be led to conclude from some expressions, as where he speaks of seeds, that they were

* See Sections 1 and 101.

implanted by nature, and from others, that they were sown by art.

"Stubbornness, lying, and ill-natured actions, are not to be permitted in him from the beginning, whatever his temper may be. Those *seeds* of vices are not to be suffered to take any *root*, but must be carefully *weeded* out, as soon as ever they begin to shew themselves in him; and your authority is to take place, and influence his mind, from the very dawning of any knowledge in him, that it may operate as a *natural principle*—and it will be as hard for him to resist it, as the *principles of his nature.*" Again, "The love of power and dominion shews itself very early—This is the *first original* of most vicious habits, that are ordinary and natural. We see children, as soon almost as they are born (*I am sure long before they can speak,*) cry, grow peevish, sullen, and out of humour, for nothing but to have their wills."

"Another thing wherein they shew their love of dominion, is their desire to have things to be theirs: He that has not observed these two humours working very betimes in children has taken little notice of their actions; and he who thinks that these *two roots* of almost all the injustice and contention, that so disturb human life, are not early to be weeded out, and contrary habits introduced, neglects the proper season to lay the foundations of a good and worthy man."

"Parents by humouring them when little, corrupt the *principles of nature* in their children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters when they them-

selves have poisoned the fountain?" "and then, perhaps too late, would be glad to get out *those weeds which their own hands have planted*, and which now have taken too deep a *root* to be easily extirpated." "I desire to know what vice can be named which parents, and those about children, do not season them with, *and drop into them the seeds of*, as soon as they are capable to receive them?" "The foundations on which several duties are built, and the *fountains* of right and wrong from which they spring, are not perhaps easily to *be let into* the minds of grown men."

I have made these quotations from Locke's work on Education, not to criticise the opinions, most of which are excellent; but to ascertain the true sense in which he used the words "seeds of vice" and "fountains of right and wrong." It may be observed that he clearly admits natural and constitutional diversities among mankind, which shew themselves almost from the cradle: and are therefore independent of any kind of education. These constitute the foundation of peculiarities in human character.

He also speaks of certain humours appearing almost as soon as children are born, which he calls "the first original of most vicious habits, that are ordinary and natural," in other words—"the roots of injustice and contention." These must be supposed to constitute the original seeds of vice. For it is plain, they cannot be *acquired*; as they are universal, and appear too early to be the effect of

education. They are the "native propensities" which lead to "stubbornness, lying," &c. and, in order to counteract these, Locke is led to contrast the force of an *acquired principle*, such as the influence of parental authority, with that of what he terms "the principles of nature," or "*a natural principle*." But when we consider that in his Essay, Locke has denied the existence of any innate principle, we are at a loss to comprehend what the expression 'natural principle' can mean; unless we forget his theory and call it simply, if a vicious propensity, *the seed of vice*.

For we are told, as may be seen above, "the love of dominion and of possession," which is not in itself evil, "is yet the first original of most vicious habits that are natural." Consequently this original of vice must be an innate seed; because its budding appears long before education can have any happy influence. Nay, it might be said, that most parents resist it from the very beginning.

Now, these propensities, humours, or natural principles, appearing so early, and leading all men so directly to vicious habits, even with the advantages of a watchful education, might be supposed, naturally enough, to constitute the seeds of vice, without any superaddition, but that of bad example. But we find that Locke has used the expression of "parents dropping into their children's minds the seeds of vice;" and we also find the expression "*letting into the mind* the foundations and fountains of right and

wrong." And hence arises some difficulty in apprehending how much, in the view of Locke, was original and how much acquired,—what seeds were natural and what were sown by art. If the native bias of the mind be to evil, and to shew its vicious propensities from the cradle, it would be superfluous to fill the mind with artificial seeds when it has already a native stock, and only requires to be placed in a fit soil to ripen them into all the various forms of wickedness and depravity. But it is a lamentable truth, if Locke's expressions clearly indicate the existence of original propensities to vice, and of none to virtue—it is a lamentable picture of human nature, I say, if such be the fact, that, while a natural principle or innate propensity is urging the mind to evil, it has to depend on an acquired rule or adventitious principle to direct it to good—having no innate bias to virtue! Yet the expression, "corrupting the *principles of nature* in their children" cannot apply with truth to evil principles, but to those which would lead to good: because, to corrupt evil principles would involve an absurdity. But to corrupt good natural principles would imply the existence of such originally, that is, of their seeds; and therefore Locke's own expression, upon a more full examination, may perhaps defend him from the conclusion, which would follow from the supposition of there being a native propensity to vice, and *none* to virtue. His language, at the same time, clearly indicates that there are some original

implanted tendencies, native propensities, roots or seeds of vice; and it would not perhaps be difficult to take the other side and shew, how early children discover the buddings from the native seeds of virtue.

But, it must be observed, that although we use the words seeds of vice and virtue, as being naturally in the mind, we speak only of propensities to action; and it is not meant that the seeds or principles which lead to vice, do therefore constitute vice; or that the seeds and principles which lead to virtue constitute virtue. It is the fruit and not the seed that degrades or dignifies; for due care may correct or extirpate what is hurtful, as it may train and strengthen what is good.

CHAP. V.

OF FIRST PRINCIPLES AND INNATE IDEAS.

We shall now consider more particularly the First Principles from which all Knowledge and Moral Feeling spring. We have concluded from analogy, as well as from the phenomena, that the intellectual and moral powers are at first in an undeveloped state. In conformity, therefore, with this view of the mind, we might be prepared to expect that these powers should at first only be capable to receive the simplest truths, and comprehend the plainest axioms. We find this, accordingly, to be the case. In every branch of human knowledge, the rudiments or elements can only at first be acquired, because the capacity is small; and the expansion or progress from Truth to Truth is afterwards as imperceptible, and I may add as unintelligible, as the evolution of a germ into its leaf and blossom.

Now, as far as regards the origin of our knowledge and the question of Innate Ideas, about which so

much has been written, it would seem incongruous to suppose that any truths, involving the least abstract notion, should be imprinted upon an undeveloped power; or that they should discover themselves in situations, where no outward object existed to call forth the exercise of that power to which these truths or principles specifically belonged. It would be as reasonable to expect that a plant should grow and bring forth fruit, where it had neither earth and water nor light and air; or that the body should be enlarged in the dimensions of its limbs and organs without a supply of food. Yet it would not follow, but that the laws of its developement might give rise to these first principles or primary truths in the mind, as determinately and universally, as if they were originally in existence and absolutely innate.

The discussion then about Innate Ideas seems to reduce itself to a narrow compass. If the capacities of the mind open as a bud (and it is matter of experience that different mental powers are unfolded in succession) we might as well look for fruit, and leaves, and branches, in the seed, as, for the evidence of an innate idea of a Supreme Being, or of any other sacred truth, imprinted on the understanding of an infant. Indeed it is almost an abuse of terms to speak of an understanding where there is no power to comprehend, or to speak of an original implanted Truth, laid up in a faculty which has no capacity to conceive or entertain a thought! And, therefore, whatever rudiment of such a conception might be

supposed naturally to exist, must needs have the same relation to mental power and its modifications, that the speck of living matter has to the animal to which it grows.

Whence, then, do First Principles arise. We can scarcely conceive that they have any other source than the native tendencies and original laws of the mental constitution.

And, though we should consider these truths or first principles in Science and Religion, as forming an essential part of the mental constitution, *when it is fully expanded, and fairly awakened;* it would not be necessary to suppose them *innate.* For if the mind is placed in a situation favourable to the developement of its powers, it will naturally form to itself and embrace these principles.

But what are these First Principles. What is their number, and in what form or terms can they be announced?

We might as well inquire what is the Faculty of Reason in its original state, or the Moral Principle? The attempt to give form and precision to any Truth in its elementary state, would, I apprehend, be as unavailing as to embody the make and constitution of the mind itself, and to give it tangible shape. Locke, therefore, in his laudable zeal after certainty of knowledge, while he insists upon the necessity of putting every thing that is in the mind into some intelligible form, without doubt, assumes more than

is capable of proof, when he asserts, that, if it cannot be reduced to an intelligible form, it can have no existence; though, at the same time, he may be justified in censuring those who contend for the existence of innate maxims and formal Truths in the *unfurnished* intellect.

In the strict sense of the words, and in fact, the mind, cannot have original and *innate* impressions, except they be those which belong to its infant state, appropriate to its mere sensitive existence, when it is no more capable of thought than a plant or shell-fish.

But, although this concession be made, and we may admit that there are no innate ideas, according to the strict meaning of the term, and no formally inscribed truths, like established propositions, to be discovered in early life; for as much as every process of growth and expansion is from small beginnings in the mind as well as the body; yet it is fair to presume that the rudiments or inherent propensities leading to mental and corporeal perfection are still essentially in existence. For, if we cannot find the matured Idea—the perfect proposition in the unfurnished intellect; such as an imprinted truth, that might be expected to show itself immediately and universally, and in a determinate form of words, would imply; yet we may reasonably conclude that the element of that idea,—in short, the element of all knowledge and all good, belongs to the mind intrinsically as part of its essence;

yet in such a manner as that, like every tendency in the human mind, it may be perverted and turned to Evil.

Therefore, if all truth must arise from some small beginnings in every mind, it is difficult to conceive a perfect proposition of any sort, however simple, to be originally in it. But if it be granted that the elements of all truths be in any way analogous to the elements of vegetable expansion in a seed, it must follow that they are innate. Hence we have *potentially* in our minds the principles from which every moral maxim may be derived. But we have no moral maxim nor any speculative truth or proposition, perfect, as it were, from our cradle. Nor is it necessary, we may presume, that, in the present scheme of things, this should be the case. An obvious intelligible truth is like an unfolded leaf which can be looked at and examined; but, which, when latent in the bud, or not protruded, is almost as inaccessible to human inquiry, as if it had no positive existence. Hence, because we cannot discover in the infant mind the manifest signs of an original innate truth or conception that there is a God, and the simple propositions relative to moral and religious duty, we are not to conclude that it has no *tendency* to develope these notions.

A seed is indeed something more than a *tendency*; it is an embodied, organized structure; and yet when we speak of the mind, we cannot assign shape and figure and substance to its faculties: but they are as

real, notwithstanding, as the parts of an outward or natural seed. Yet there is as great a difference between the seed or element of a truth or proposition and the truth itself, as between the bud and matured fruit. They are, however, of the same nature respectively, that is, the proposition and its element, and the fruit and its seed, are respectively allied; and if we could know what the essence of the mind really is, we should have no occasion to use the word seed, or root, as applied to its native propensities. Now, as it is from a portion of living matter,—an embryo, in many cases, not larger than a speck, that the strong and perfect animal is formed; so it is from the smallest beginnings, which in this sense may be called natural principles, that truths, or thoughts, which are modifications of mind, originate. But how thoughts originate is utterly inconceivable. It is a mystery belonging to that hidden system of mind, which it is presumed, can never be revealed. It would be no easy task to take a thousand different seeds of as many different plants, and attempt by the aid of the microscope or any other invention, to understand their structure, to explain the essential difference between them, and to show the manner in which the peculiar growth in each is effected by the power of assimilation: yet this would be light in comparison. In those operations of divine power which are accompanied with creative energy; as is the case in every instance of the generative process, of whatever kind, in plants or animals; there are

ultimate facts, which limit the most profound and scrutinizing researches. It is possible that a few more laws than we know, may yet be discovered: but a few more than these, and many more even in addition, would still leave a veil of darkness beyond that never could be pierced. There is nothing, which can reasonably induce us to think, that the great Creator of the Universe will ever intrust any mortal with the secrets of his creating power. We have neither senses nor faculties competent to unravel the mighty mystery; nor, I may add, do we seem to have a system of duties compatible with the knowledge. If presumption can rise to such a height in those who only reach the threshold of this science, what would it not aim at, if it was permitted to human vanity to enter, as with the Deity, into these hidden wonders of his works, and to know the secret springs of life in any of his creatures?

Seeing, therefore, we can expect to attain so little real knowledge of creating power in tangible corporeal things, how can we hope that the human capacity will ever be enlarged so as to comprehend the generation of thought? We know that the human understanding is neither a *cell*, nor a *cabinet*, nor yet a *seed*. But we also know that, like the last, it developes its powers in succession; that the capacity of these is at first very small, and only fit to receive the simplest elements of knowledge; that the mind must be watered, cultivated, and trained,—the good pro-

pensities cherished, and the evil rooted up; and that according to the labour, such will be the fruit both in quality and abundance.

This is matter of experience, and requires no metaphysical ingenuity to prove or make it more clear. It is matter of experience also, that some natural principles lead to strife and jealousy, while others tend to harmony and good will; that some are selfish, whilst others are generous, and prompt us to various disinterested offices for the good of others. But it affords ground of fair inference that principles in the mind which operate universally in this way, with more or less power, must be intrinsically its own. And, it surely does not follow, that because they may happen to be more or less developed in different human beings; and because, by a wise moral œconomy, one man may instruct another, therefore they are infused, as it were, from one mind into another: and that, in this way, principles of Good and Evil are *wholly* at the disposal of mankind to embue each other with, as accident and circumstances, favourably or unfavourably combined, may determine.

This cannot be considered a just view of the case. In the mind as in nature there are sown various seeds. Why those tending to evil should be the native progeny of the mind is not now a question with which we have any thing to do. It is certain that such propensities do exist; and it is our duty to conclude, that, so far as concerns the great author, an all-wise merciful

Being is clear, and to be fully justified in all his institutions. If therefore we see depravity, it must arise from man himself.

Now, it is not within the limits of human power to *create* any thing anew. But every thing has some standard of perfection to which it may attain; and the divine workmanship, in the case of man, may be marred, or carried forward to this standard of perfection by the cooperation of man himself. The seeds are already planted. There must be antagonist propensities, or there could be no internal struggle, and consequently no virtue. But as each is accountable to God alone for his opportunities as well as for his talents, it is not conceivable that moral and accountable agents should be absolutely and entirely dependent on their fellow creatures to plant this or the other seed; so that all the fruit should be exclusively of vice, or all exclusively of virtue. We have no such power over each other, by our very best instruction, or by our worst example. Instead of planting, unless he plants by the power of God himself,—a commission which is granted but to few—Man is only the humble minister to weed and to water. His work is plain and simple before him; and there is enough for him to do in training the good and rooting out the bad, either in himself or his neighbour. The influence or power of bad example is not *in effect* the introduction of some new and foreign seed into the soil of the heart: it is the corruption of what is originally good, or if not positively

good, which has at least the germ of good,—it is the contagion which blights the opening morals, in other words, the vicious element, in which its own native weeds become rank, engendering poison, and converting that which might be the cultivated retreat of purity and virtue, into the baneful inclosure of immorality and irreligion.

From the foregoing views we may perceive how writers have erred on the subject of Innate Ideas and Innate Practical Principles. Some, and among them Locke, because they could not discover in the infant mind certain precise and intelligible truths, which could be put in the form of regular propositions, have denied all innate principles of truth, and with them, the original seeds, elements, or foundations, on which they are built. Others have maintained that man is born with engraven notions and moral maxims; though in attempting to define these original truths, they have evidently failed of success; either reducing them to an enunciation so simple as, like identical propositions, to mean nothing, or magnifying them into important propositions, which the mind, in its unevolved state, is clearly unable to comprehend. We see, therefore, how prone is man, in speculation, to run into extremes; and, when he cannot attain certain knowledge, how ready to affirm or deny, with positive assurance; notwithstanding, that the truth may lie in a medium between these opposite opinions. However desirable certain knowledge may be, the nature of things often refuses that precise and definite

form of words in which propositions are sometimes announced; and perhaps there are no points in which affirmation and negation are so decided, as those in which both parties are absolutely in error, and where each party should abate somewhat of his own opinion, and concede something to his opponent. Hence there would seem to be a legitimate medium between the opinion of those who maintain against Locke, some innate notions of things or engraven truths, and those who maintain, with him, that all truth arises from without, by the senses or some reflex operation of the mind on its acquired notions. When Boyle, Hale, Herbert, and others, spoke of innate truths or congenite propositions engraven on the mind by the Deity; perhaps they erred as well as Locke, who asserted that the mind was absolutely a blank—containing nothing original—not even the *seed* or *spark*, or *fountain* of a single truth.

It is for these reasons that I have hesitated to produce any examples of what are called First Principles in Reasoning and Morals. Yet I am well aware that where so much stress is laid upon them, some particular notice of them will naturally be expected. I believe, however, that like the foundation of a building or the roots of a plant, the true and genuine source of reason and morality must remain hidden. I have seen no enumeration with which I am satisfied. Let us for a moment consider the following, which have been put forth as the primary elements or first Truths in question.

Of the class belonging to Reason are such as these: —"It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be."—"Two and two make four."—"A part is less than the whole."—"Nothing can be the cause of itself."—"Two contradictory propositions cannot be both true," &c. &c.

Of the class belonging to Morals are such as these: —"Reverence is due to God."—"Gratitude is due to benefactors."—"Veracity and justice are to be practiced."—"It is wrong to take from another the fruit of his labour."—"We should do to others as we would wish them to do to ourselves," &c. &c.

The first class are self-evident Truths; and, as Locke has suggested, a man might know them without proceeding much farther in knowledge, or being much helped by them to attain it.

The second class comprehends so many important Truths, that they can hardly be viewed in the light of the simplest and most obvious principles, which spring from the root of Moral Emotion. And therefore as the first cannot be accounted the foundation of our reasonings; the second are by far too complex to allow us to consider them as innate principles, familiar to childhood, and the only ground-work of morality and religion.

I have been inclined to think, that *what* the simplest vocal sounds of an infant are to perfect speech, or, their representatives, the letters of the alphabet, to written language; such is the relation of the native and primary elements of Reason to correct

rules of Judgment, and of the native primary elements of moral feeling to the perfect rules of moral obligation.

We know that there is a foundation in nature, that is, in the structure of the organs of speech, for those elementary articulate sounds, which may afterwards be combined by art into discourse and language. And there is good reason to think that there is a foundation in nature, that is, a tendency in the original make of the mind, to form those primary *shoots* of Reason which may afterwards be improved into art and science; as well as a foundation or tendency to protrude those *buddings* of moral emotion (such as may be seen very early in children to mark their instinctive sense of shame or demerit)—which may be afterwards refined into the perfect System of Virtue and Piety.

Now the simple sounds of the vocal organs—the elements of language—mean little in themselves; though when combined, they are so important. And, it appears that the attempt to give precise form to the primary elements of speculative and practical principles, would be unavailing and unsatisfactory. For, it is probable that *too much* of a definite character would be claimed by the advocate for Innate Truths, and that *too little*, if any thing, would be admitted by the precise reasoner, who must either have an intellible maxim and decided proposition before him, or none at all.

The following remarks from Dr. Watts, on the

subject of first principles in Reasoning and Morals, which I was so fortunate as to meet with, after most of the preceding observations were written, will, I flatter myself, serve to confirm some of the views I have taken.

" It is so much the very nature and make of the soul to see and judge of things in this manner, *that I take it to be a part of Reason itself*, which, as it were, *implicitly* contains in it these natural axioms of Truth or principles of Judgment *inwrought by the Creator of our souls; not in the explicit form of propositions, but as principles and springs of judgment and reasoning.*" .....I allow also in the same manner, that there is such a thing, which may be called a *Moral Sense* in the mind, which inclines the man to judge right, and especially in the more general, plain, and obvious queries about virtue and vice:—But this Moral Sense is still the same thing,—*is the very nature and make of the mind—and it contains in it these plain and general principles of morality not explicitly as propositions, but only as native principles*, by which it judges and cannot but judge virtue to be fit and vice unfit for intelligent and social creatures which God has made."*....." To determine how great is the number of these propositions is impossible; *for they are not in the soul as propositions*; but it is an undoubted truth that a mind awaking out of nothing into being and presented with particular objects, would not fail at once to judge concerning them

* Philosoph. Essays, Sect. 4.

according to, and by the force, of some such *innate principles* as these, or just as a man would judge who had learnt these explicit propositions; which indeed *are so nearly allied to its own nature, that they may be called almost a part of itself.*".....“ Therefore I take the mind or soul of man not to be so perfectly indifferent to receive all impressions as a *rasa tabula*, or white paper.".....“ Hence there may be some practical principles also innate, in the foregoing sense, *though not in the form of propositions.*"*

It was before observed, that it is as impossible to comprehend the nature of a seed or spark of Truth, (that is, of a First Principle taken in this sense) as the generation of thought itself. And therefore it may be objected, that to insist upon this analogy against the theory of Locke, is to argue for something, if possible, more hypothetical than any of his principles. I acknowledge the objection might have some weight, if Locke himself had not admitted, by the motto which he has chosen, as I think may be fairly inferred, the utter ignorance of man on this subject.†

Voltaire has evidently taken up the same idea. “ What inconsistency!" says he, “ we know not how the earth produces a blade of grass, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her who is with child; and

* Philosoph. Essays, Sect. 3.

† The motto is this: “ As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; Even so, thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all things."—Eccles. xi. 5.

yet we would persuade ourselves that we understand the nature and generation of our ideas."*

Cudworth, in his quaint style, has made some pointed allusions to the same thing. He animadverts in the following terms on what he calls the double error of philosophers:—First, that they would make "*Sensible Ideas* to be totally impressed from without in a gross corporeal manner upon the soul, as upon a dead thing: and, secondly, they suppose that *Intelligible Ideas* are to be made out of these Sensible Ideas,—as it were, by the hewing off certain chips from them, or by hammering, beating, or anvilling of them out into thin Intelligible Ideas; as if solid and massy gold should be beaten out into thin leaf gold." "To which purpose," he adds, "they have ingeniously contrived and set up an *Active Understanding*, like a smith or carpenter, with his shop or forge in the brain, furnished with all necessary tools and instruments for such a work. Where I would only demand of these philosophers, whether this their so expert smith or architect, the Active Understanding, when he goes about his work doth know what he is to do with these Phantasms (or Ideas) beforehand, what he is to make of them, and unto what shape to bring them. If he do not, he must be a bungling workman; but if he do, he is prevented in his design and undertaking, his work being done already to his hand; for he must needs have the Intelligible Idea

* See Voltaire's account of Newton's Discoveries, also Stewart's Philosophical Essays, where the passage is cited.

of that which he knows or understands, *already within himself*; and, therefore, now to what purpose should he use his tools and go about to hew and hammer and anvil out these phantasms into thin and subtle Intelligible Ideas merely to make that which he hath already, and which was native and domestick to him."

It is difficult to imagine that Harris, the author of Hermes, had not the preceding passage in view when he wrote the following remarks on Locke's system, quoted by Dugald Stewart. "Mark," says he, "the order of things, according to the account of our later metaphysicians. First, comes that huge body, the sensible world. Then this, and its attributes beget Sensible Ideas. Then, out of Sensible Ideas, by a kind of lopping and pruning, are made ideas intelligible, whether specific or general. Thus, should they admit that mind was coeval with body; yet, till body gave it ideas, and awakened its dormant powers, it could at best have been nothing more than a sort of dead capacity; for, innate ideas it could not possibly have any."—"For my own part, when I read the detail about Sensation and Reflexion, and am taught the process at large how my Ideas are all generated, *I seem to view the human soul in the light of a crucible, where truths are produced by a kind of logical chemistry.*"

Before quoting this passage, and in reference to it, Stewart takes occasion to observe, that it is now a considerable time since this fundamental principle of Locke's system (that all our knowledge is derived

from Sensation and Reflexion), began to lose its authority in England; "and," he adds, "the sceptical conclusions, which it had been employed to support by some later writers, furnished its opponents with very plausible arguments against it."*

This eminent writer further observes, that "the mind cannot, without the greatest absurdity, be considered in the light of a receptacle which is gradually furnished from without by materials introduced by the channel of the Senses; nor in that of a *tabula rasa* upon which copies or resemblances of things external are imprinted:"—and he seems to prove very sufficiently, by a consideration of the Senses of Hearing and Smelling, apart from the other three, that, "although certain impressions on our organs of sense are necessary to awaken the mind into consciousness of its own existence, and to give rise to the exercise of its various faculties; yet all this might have happened without our having any knowledge of the qualities or even of the existence of the material world." This author admits, that with some qualifications, the origin of all our knowledge may be referred to the impressions made on our organs of sense, and that without these impressions it would have been impossible for us to arrive at the knowledge of our faculties." But he remarks in another place, that "when it was first asserted that there is nothing in the Intellect, which does not come to it through the medium of sense; there cannot be a doubt, that by this last

* See Elements of Philosophy, vol. i. p. 96.

term were understood exclusively our powers of *external* perception. In process of time however it came to be discovered that there are many Ideas which cannot possibly be traced to this source, and which of consequence afford undeniable proof that the scholastic account of the origin of our Ideas is extremely imperfect."*

Upon the whole, we may conclude, that too much stress has been laid upon *innate original truths*, as well as upon the opposite opinion; and that an unqualified admission of either doctrine will lead to error. It is, however, scarcely credible that so many acute and eminent writers could have used the word *seed* or *spark*, with reference to some native original rudiments of speculative and moral truth, had there not been good natural grounds for the application. It may, nevertheless, be true, that some outward occasion is at first necessary to call forth the internal power, whatever it may be, into activity: and the probability is, that were it not for outward circumstances, many of the native original powers of the mind would never exhibit themselves. Because it is by such outward circumstances, affording the occasion of excitement, that is, by their use, that man experimentally knows he possesses those talents, propensities, and principles which were given him by his Maker, and which would otherwise remained concealed and unemployed. It would be easy to illustrate this position by a reference to the senses, appetites, feelings,

* Elements of Philosophy, vol. I. chap. I.

&c. which have all their respective objects, either in the qualities of matter or the qualities of human actions.

The mind has as natural a tendency to form to itself a first principle in reasoning or in morals—as any of the outward senses has to convey agreeable or disagreeable impressions to the seat of thought. We must however except, that it is a later and higher work,—in as much as sensitive operations in nature precede mental;—the vegetative, in order of time, going before the animal, and the animal before the intellectual. Truth and falsehood, right and wrong, good and evil, have their abstract, (may I not say,) their immutable relations,—as well as sweet and bitter, harmony and discord, beauty and its opposite in form and colour, and what is delicious and offensive in odours.

These things are all independent of the will of man, or of any arbitrary customs or decisions. It was said formerly, and the denunciation has immutable truth for its basis: "Wo unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil; that put Darkness for Light, and light for darkness; *that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.*" Isa. v. 20. The nature of things, whether in physics or ethics, cannot be changed without doing violence to the whole scheme of God's institutions appointed for the natural and moral goverment of the world. For, in their existing state, natural and moral relations maintain a beautiful harmony. But he who would confound

orginal distinctions, which are as widely separated as light from darkness, would make variable human enactments the rules of his conduct; and would put the uncertain opinions of man before the ordinances of his Maker.

It is scarcely necessary for me to point out the connection of the following quotation, from the writings of Dr. Samuel Clarke, with the subject under our notice. This author judiciously states that "It was a very wise observation of Plato, received from Socrates: that if you take a young man, impartial and unprejudiced, one that never had any learning, nor any experience in the world; and examine him about the natural relations and proportions of things, (or the moral differences of Good and Evil,) you may, only by asking him questions, without teaching him any thing at all directly, cause him to express in his answers just and adequate notions of *Geometrical Truths*, (and true and exact determinations concerning matters of *right and wrong*.) From whence *He* thought it was to be concluded, that all knowledge and learning is nothing but memory, or only a recollecting upon every new occasion, what had been before known in a state of pre-existence. And some others, both ancient and moderns, have concluded that the Ideas of all first and simple Truths, either natural or moral, are *Innate* and originally *impressed* or *stampt* upon the mind. In their inference from the observation, the authors of both these opinions seem to be mistaken. But thus much it proves un-

avoidably: that the differences, relations, and proportions of things both natural and moral, in which all unprejudiced minds thus naturally agree, are certain, unalterable and real *in the things themselves;* and do not at all depend on the variable opinions, fancies or imaginations of men prejudiced by education, laws, customs, or evil practices: and also, that the mind of man naturally and unavoidably gives its assent, as to natural and geometrical truth, so also to the moral differences of things, and to the fitness and reasonableness of the obligation of the everlasting Law of Righteousness, whenever fairly and plainly proposed." — *Clarke's Evidence of Nat. and Rev. Relig.* p. 44.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE SEEDS OF VICE AND VIRTUE, AND OF BENEVOLENCE AND SELF-LOVE.

SECT. I.

Of the Seeds of Vice.

IF Man has the seeds of good and evil in himself, it may be asked what are the native propensities or original principles from which vice and virtue proceed, and in what order are they developed?

As we argue on the presumption that he is not wholly a factitious being, we are bound to show that it is not necessary to look to any other source than his own heart, for the roots or fountains from which good and evil, in their various shapes and appearances, have their ramifications. It is rather too much for any one to assume, that, while man evidently displays the seeds of vice (or those principles which may lead to vice) original and inherent in his nature; he is indebted to his fellow-creature or to the deductions of his own reason, and not to the free bounty of Providence or nature for his incitements to virtue:

in other words, it is going far to say, that while he has evil propensities *within*, his good propensities must come *by observation* or from *without*.—Yet this is plainly the sum of the argument we are opposing. When we take a review of the Natural Appetites, Desires and Affections, we may easily discover that these classes of Active Principles have in themselves the germs of vice;—illustrating that sacred Truth, that when man is tempted, he is not tempted of God, but of the lusts and desires of his own heart. For in all these things the Benevolent Parent of the Universe is fully justified.

I shall treat of the Appetites, Desires, and Affections, in order.

I. Appetites. The Appetites were implanted for especial use in the physical economy; and all philosophers agree that without these natural impulses, reason would be incompetent to provide for the preservation of the individual and the continuance of the species. But, by their abuse, these very appetites give rise to gluttony, drunkenness, and sensual indulgence in all its various modifications. In consequence of this, notwithstanding his higher endowments, man is brought down to a level with the brute: nay, he is sunk still lower; for he even uses his higher endowments as means to stimulate his appetites to unnatural excess, and prostitutes that which is noble to the vilest ends.

One of the Appetites does not indeed show itself at birth, nor for a long period afterwards. But it is

easy to perceive the wisdom of that institution, by which the stimulus of this Appetite is deferred to a suitable age; so that it shall not interfere with rational pursuits, nor add its influence too early in the passionate excitements of the mind.

And, although it is developed after so many years; it affords one decisive proof, that whatever emotions appear in the mind, are not always excited by education or outward circumstances. For, what could education effect, if the seeds of this animal propensity were not laid in the bodily organization? It is at the same time unquestionable, that effeminacy, luxury, and dissipation of thought, with a genial climate, may induce a premature developement; that is, Art may ripen, but it does not implant the seed

II. Desires. The Desires, as they are called, are active principles inherent in our nature which, as Locke observes, in regard to the love of Power, of Possession, and of Esteem or Commendation, appear almost from the cradle. The Desires do not take their rise from the body, nor do they operate periodically after certain intervals, and cease on the attainment of their objects. In these respects they differ from the Appetites. They are original instinctive impulses of the mind, and we cannot doubt that they were implanted for wise purposes. These purposes, however, it is not my business to point out. But although, from the impulse of these Desires, we may trace useful and important ends; it is no less true that, from the same origin, we may trace many evils.

Among the principal of these Desires we may reckon, 1. The Desire of Knowledge, or the principle of Curiosity. 2. The Desire of Power and of Possession. 3. The Desire of Esteem. 4. The Desire of Superiority, or the principle of Emulation.

On the first it is scarcely necessary to make a remark.

The second, or the Desire of Power, it is easy to see, when carried to excess, must prove a fruitful source of evil. It is in fact "the root of almost all the injustice and contention that so disturb human life."* It is one of the first active principles that appear in children. The Love of Power is the root of Ambition and Strife: and the Love of Possession is the root of Avarice, Theft and Covetousness.

From the natural Desire of Esteem, which, Stewart observes, appears very early in infants, who long before they are able to reflect on the advantages resulting from the good opinion of others, and even before they acquire the use of speech, are sensibly mortified by any expression of neglect or contempt—from this Desire, (which, well used, raises the mind from low pursuits) when carried to *excess*, pride and vanity, and the love of fame, take their origin. Locke himself even admits, "That we are all even from our cradles vain and proud creatures."—*Thoughts on Education*, p. 139.

The Desire of Superiority, or Emulation, is an ac-

* See Locke on Education, s. 105; and Stewart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy, part 2.

tive principle nearly allied to the two last, and is one of the leading springs of human improvement. From this root arises Envy, in its excess, one of the most hateful passions. Their affinity is thus marked by Pope:

> "*Envy*, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
> Is *Emulation* in the learn'd or brave."

III. Affections. The Affections are those active principles or natural impulses, by which man is disposed to communicate good or ill to his fellow-creatures. Hence they are divided into the benevolent and malevolent. I am now to notice the latter. The natural root of all the malevolent feelings appears to be the instinctive principle of Resentment: which Dr. Butler and others have justly considered to be the only principle of this kind implanted in us by nature; and that its object is to guard us against sudden violence in cases where Reason would come too late to our assistance. Resentment very soon subsides when we are convinced, that no injury was intended. *Indignation* is the feeling excited, when we see one person intentionally injuring another without cause.

Hatred, Malice, Rage and Revenge are evil branches springing from this root; and according to the usages of civilized and savage society, display themselves in a great variety of complex acts, into which, *Deliberation*, the characteristic of a rational being, more or less enters. For, in this case, as in that of the Appetites and Desires, the higher faculties of the mind are often employed in subserviency to

the lower propensities; not only in aggravating the malignity and bitterness of the latter, but in devising means, by cunning, treachery, or open violence, for the attainment of their objects. Hence arises cruelty in all its forms, with brutal ferocity and murder. And hence proceed the vices of those who call themselves civilized, Retaliation, Duelling, and *that outrage* upon all Reason, Humanity and Religion—SYSTEMATIC WARFARE.

From all that has been said, of the active principles above enumerated, I apprehend it may be fairly concluded that there is not a vice, which deforms the human character, that may not be traced from a few simple natural propensities or seeds, which appear in children, almost as soon as they discover any signs of character at all, and therefore long before that period when Education has power to make its impressions.

The remarks of Dr. Price, in allusion to this subject, are deserving of attention: "Tis true," he observes, "that these very principles, the necessity of which, to the preservation and happiness of the species, we so evidently see, often prove, in event, the causes of many grievous evils, and the most dreadful calamities. But they are plainly *intended* for *good*. These evils are the *accidental*, not the *proper and direct* consequences of them: they proceed from the unnatural abuse and corruption of them; and happen entirely through our own fault and folly, contrary to what appears to be the will and constitution of our Maker. It is impossible to produce one

instance, in which the original and ultimate direction of nature is to evil, or to any thing, not upon the whole, best." See *Price's Review*, chap. 3.

The last opinion, must however be received with the annexed cautions, and those limitations which are pointed out in a subsequent part of this Essay.

In the preceding enumeration of the roots and branches of the several vices, I have not spoken of the Passions: for they seem to be turbulent emotions of the mind, restricted to none, but arising from all the active principles, when they exceed the rule of moderation; that is, when they are carried beyond the bounds of reason. As ships, in a storm, without a pilot, are in danger of being driven upon rocks and shoals; so is the mind in peril, when it is tossed by the tempest of Passion, and unwilling or unable to hear the voice of Reason.

Sect. II.

Of the Seed of Virtue.

It is an arduous task, by any process of natural inquiry, to trace Virtue to its original source. Dr. Hutcheson has remarked, that "it is a difficult question, involving a threefold consideration, namely, whether it comes to man by Nature, or by Custom and Education, or by some Divine Instinct." Dr. Hutcheson does not profess to solve the difficulty, but he observes, that learning, instruction and exercise

will improve the implanted powers (*"vires insitas"*); and expresses his wish that all these causes may co-operate. For, that "nature itself and divine instinct will sometimes avail *without learning;* but without some implanted disposition to good (*ευφυια*)—some natural virtuous inclination, "which," he believes, "is scarcely denied to any, *learning will avail nothing.*"*

It is not my business to discuss the abstract question above noticed: metaphysical discussions of this sort, being as far from my purpose as they are beyond my ability.

Virtue, I may premise for the sake of brevity, has been understood, in opposition to vice, by some, to comprehend what is good and excellent in human character—of which the unbiassed testimony of the heart is the witness; and by others, to be the practical observance of every civil, moral, and religious duty. Hence it would appear to be *that* which the Christian may account his glory as well as the Stoic: but it is received by the first as the free gift of Providence with humble thankfulness; and boasted of by the last, as the attainment of man's unassisted power, with pride and self-complacency.

With many other eminent philosophers, whose opinions I have already quoted on this point, Dr. Hutcheson has admitted that we have *innate seeds of virtue.*†

* Phil. Mor. Inst. Compend. lib. 1. cap. 3.

† "Quamvis haud spernendos dederit natura igniculos, ingeniisque nostris *innata sint quædam virtutum semina*, quæ quidem raro adolescere patimur."—*Hutches. Phil. Mor.* lib. 1. cap. 1.

It is natural, therefore, to inquire, what are the earliest indications of virtue in children: for, what so many have taken for granted, can scarcely rest on a false foundation.

We have, I think, cause to lament the proneness of human nature to vice; and it must appear evident to those who watch the openings of character in children, that some of the first mental indications, when they are able to show the signs of any active principles, are not, so far as can be judged, of a virtuous tendency. This appears to be a moral fact, common to every age and nation, however it may be explained. The seeds of virtue do not appear to show themselves so early as the seeds of vice, whatever may be the advantages of outward good example. But, in as much as virtue is a plant of nobler and later growth, it may obey that natural law, which subjects the things that are more excellent to a more tardy developement. For, as that was not *first* which is spiritual, but that which is animal, and *afterward* that which is spiritual; so, it may be consistent with the right order of things, that the animal, sensual or inferior propensities should appear before the moral or spiritual. Indeed, we can scarcely see for what end these latter noble principles should appear in an infant, before it has discovered one spark even of intellect; for to it, moral conduct must be, in effect, a mere name.

There is a progression or rising scale in nature,—in the different orders of beings, and even in the

same being:—a sensitive, an animal, an intellectual and a moral state, gradually unfolded, when things proceed in order. The foundation is as deeply laid for one degree in the scale as for another,—implanted principles being as necessary for the succeeding change, as for that which went before. But, what is slowly developed, and slowly comes to maturity, is commonly most perfect. The propensities, which appear first, are not so excellent as those which unfold themselves later. A being created for this earth as its first abode, helpless in body and feeble in mind, would of necessity protrude those animal powers, suited to its temporary state of existence, *before* it put forth the buddings of virtue and religion,—fruit destined for a better world,—from its immortal seed. It would not, therefore, follow, as some have been ready to infer, that because the manifestation of a propensity or power had not priority, it must be accounted adventitious,—the effect of education, and not of original institution. Though something is left to man, yet all is not of man; he is still debtor for his talents. Though he may abuse these talents, or bury them in a napkin; he cannot plead that he has not received them.

As the seed takes root downwards in the earth, *before* it springs upwards into light; so has the human mind its earthly attachments, and manifests the inferior propensities of its nature before the superior. What precise direction would have been given to these *same* inferior propensities, had man been en-

abled by the constitution of his nature, to pursue one uniform course of virtue, and to continue in a state of innocence; or whether these propensities have been modified and actually changed so as to assume a more corrupt tendency, than was at first designed by the Creator, and therefore have been adapted to a less perfect moral system, can only be matter of conjecture. We see enough, on the most superficial view, to convince us, that man is of nobler descent than his pursuits commonly indicate; that by some means his purity is tarnished; that he has only, as it were, some feeble sparks and relics of a better nature; and that he has anticipations of *Good*, which in himself and by himself he has no power to realize in this world. Man's early tendency to vice, therefore, demonstrates an inherent infirmity; of which his subsequent virtuous efforts and exercises, in the generality of mankind at least, tend only to confirm the proof; notwithstanding every thing that some writers have boasted in regard to the native excellence and moral perfectability of human nature. We are not however at liberty to say, that the very principles which lead to vice, are not in themselves good. Amidst all the depravity of human nature, we see the marks of Divine Wisdom—the signs of supreme Benevolence in every faculty and propensity; and can have little difficulty in conceiving that a proper and useful direction might have been originally given to every propensity or root that is now so prone to engender evil.

TEMPERANCE.

I shall now proceed to consider what relation some of the branches of Virtue bear to the different active principles, as the Appetites, Desires, and Affections. These may be good in themselves, but they are liable to abuse.

The Ancient Philosophers were aware that the chief good of man did not consist in unrestrained indulgence of these active propensities; and, in order to oppose their excess, very early suggested the rules of a virtuous life; which they comprehended under the general title of the four Cardinal Virtues, and denominated Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, and Justice. Though it may be questioned whether this heathen enumeration of the virtues may not include more of pride than of humility, and may not belong to a Stoical system of morals more than to a Christian; yet we must allow that these virtues are in themselves truly excellent, when practised under the only right influence, Piety and the Love of God. But there are virtues which are not included in this classification. The Christian Virtues of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Meekness, open a different view of the relation we stand in to God and to our neighbour from any thing we can gather from those above named.

If the abuse and excess of the natural Appetites lead to vicious indulgence,—Intemperance, dissipation, and dissolute conduct,—a state of anarchy, like

that of the body politic, in which the lower principles of the mind usurp dominion and exercise authority over the higher;—it is easy to see that on the other hand, the proper use will lead to Temperance in all its forms,—sobriety, chastity, well-ordered frugality and contentment. The Habit of Temperance, which is the Virtue, is therefore built upon this foundation, and springs from the appetites themselves; but could never be formed without the direction of *some regulating principle:* hence, the relation is not immediate. For it is obvious that the relation between the Appetites and Virtue, as it is here pointed out, implies the intervention of some wise directing power, which may discover what is the use and what the abuse. We must allow that children, at first, or previously to their parents' understood will, do not seem to have any idea, but of gratifying the appetite or present inclination, in every thing they can procure, without the least *visible* moral check; and this continues until they are warned by some means or other that this gratification may be inordinate and hence injurious. Experience, indeed, will often demonstrate that self-denial, which is an exercise of Temperance, is generally rewarded with some future advantage. Conscience and Reason, being later in growth than Appetite and Sense, which are more needful to the animal state, or giving only feeble intimation of duty in these things, do not afford the necessary counteracting influence, either for the perfection of the rational or moral state. With children, therefore,

Appetite is at first the stronger, and hurries to enjoyment, because the antagonist or virtuous principle is not firm enough to oppose its career. If the innate power of virtue were at first adequate, there would be no need of outward discipline; which every parent knows to be necessary to bend the untoward will, to restrain the violence of temper, and to lead the youthful desires, which are the elements of active pursuit, in the right path. This very want in the moral system, as well as in the intellectual, lays the foundation for outward instruction, and, in the right economy of things, is beautifully supplied by those parental cares, which, in fulfilling these natural duties, kindle the charities of human nature, awake the endearments of kindred, and cement the bonds of society. Besides, it is questionable how far the tender minds of children would bear a natural check or moral restraining power, to act on the *first occasions* when Appetite and Desire influence the will, in opposition to these natural impulses: for they are the very spring of early activity, and can scarcely be seriously abused while children have the necessary guardianship of parents to direct and take care of their youth. If nature itself supplied every lesson appertaining to virtue, the youthful mind, in these things, would be independent of parental instruction.

PRUDENCE.

The Desires have already been spoken of, as the Second Class of active principles from which vice may

spring: and as these, like the Appetites, may be carried to excess, they will require some branch of virtue to restrain their extravagance, and to make them subservient to usefulness.

The Desire of Knowledge, that of Power and Possession, of Esteem, and of Superiority, it has been observed, appear very early in life.

Prudence or Discretion, in words and actions, is the name assigned by some to that cardinal virtue by which the Desires are regulated, and the mind turned to the only fit objects of a virtuous life. Prudence is Wisdom applied to Practice.*

Desire is as apt to grow out into weeds as Appetite; and a single object of pursuit may occupy the mind with its extravagance, to the exclusion of every praiseworthy enterprise. As we have the Voluptuary, who devotes himself to the lowest gratifications; so have we the Ambitious, the Covetous, the Proud, the Inquisitive, raised a step above sensual desire, and each pursuing his object with the whole bent of his mind; till that pursuit seems practically to constitute the end of his being. But, amidst all the variety of pursuits, there is but one true end of a rational and immortal nature—which is, to do the will of God. Variety of pursuit is in itself laudable and necessary;

* Whether it be right to call it Prudence or not, it is plain, that some virtue is necessary for the end proposed; and we can find no other of the four which applies; for I am not now speaking of the Christian Virtues: I would not, however, be understood to say that Prudence is not sometimes assisted by Temperance, and perhaps also by Justice. All spring from the same fountain; and the active powers may be variously united in impelling the mind.

and indeed it arises from original diversities of character; but it is permitted to no man to make one secular object of pursuit, however laudable, the end of his being. And nothing but his own heart can tell him, amidst the delusions which self-love will always practice; whether it is the love of his Almighty Parent, which is first in his affections.

He that is unwearied in adding to his riches, and unsatisfied with his gains, accumulates to himself many cares; and too often leaves his possessions behind him to be worthlessly squandered—a mere engine of *covetousness*, unprovided with the best treasure. And, though he plead that a provision for his family is the object; the unhallowed pursuit can neither prove a blessing to him nor them.

He that is *over-curious*, busies himself in other men's affairs, whilst his own are neglected; or vexes himself with the vain pursuit of forbidden knowledge, proposing an endless variety of questions in Science and Religion (many of them incapable of solution) and at the same time overlooking the plain and obvious path of duty, in which, it is said, the way-faring man, though a fool, cannot err.

And he that is restless after power, and *ambitious* of worldly honours, is forced to acknowledge when they are attained, that something is still wanting to complete his happiness,—another height to ascend, as with Alexander, another world to conquer.

And lastly, whoever is infatuated with the Love of Fame, so as to sacrifice every thing to its delusions,

whether it be for a name in art, science, or literature, notwithstanding these are raised a step in dignity above the objects last stated, is not alive to his real interest:—what does he follow but a Dream? Unless art, science, and literature, laudable however they be, constitute virtue, he has not aimed at the all-important prize. For, a niche in the Temple of Fame does not entitle its possessor to a name amongst the virtuous and good:—and these alone are truly wise.

It is Prudence, therefore, that limits the Desires; so that their ends shall be lawful, and be attained by lawful means; the end and means being strictly in harmony, and agreeing with the same rule. For, in the enterprizes of true Wisdom, the very best end—even what carries the semblance of necessity,—will not justify the use of means bearing the stamp of dishonour. The purest ends cannot wipe away the stain of unconsecrated means: for, if once the standard is lowered, there is not an expedient, however base, which the sophistry of reason will not bring itself to approve. Therefore, no object, whether it be proposed as a mean or an end, must be suffered to eclipse the beauty and light of virtue.

FORTITUDE.

When we come to examine the ground on which the virtue of Fortitude is built, we shall find that it is not on Appetite, Desire, or Affection; but that it has a foundation equally natural, and springs from the make and constitution of man, and from the very circumstances in which he is placed. Fortitude is the shield—the necessary defence of an intellectual and

moral being, endowed with feelings corporeal and mental, that expose him continually to the pain and anguish, the perils and unavoidable afflictions, which are incident to Humanity. He who expects to live a life of ease, and supposes that he can make himself independent of suffering, is therefore sure to be disappointed; unless he is destitute of feeling both in mind and body. For we may be tried with Pain as well as Sorrow. It is one thing to be indifferent to the calamities of life, from an affected stoical or natural insensibility; and another to rise above them, *whilst they are acutely felt*, with virtuous magnanimity. The thoughtless libertine seeks to drown his cares in what he calls pleasure—the shortlived enjoyment of sense; and the afflicted mourner, who is pressed down with grief, often sinks into an abject state of despondency. Hence there is a necessity for some virtue, which shall support the mind against these extremes, and enable it to preserve a degree of firmness competent to the arduous duties of life. As, from the cradle, the body is liable to pain, and the mind to innumerable sources of affliction; the first must be endured with Patience and the last with Resignation. The child that is not early instructed by some kind and experienced friend in the practice of this virtue, when the slightest occasion occurs for its exercise, is but ill prepared for the certain trials that will eventually befal his mature age.

To the good man struggling with adversity, or engaged in correcting the vices and reforming the manners of a corrupt age, Fortitude is more immediately

necessary; as, by it he is strengthened to follow the path of Duty, even in the midst of dangers and persecuting enemies. And thus, true Fortitude, while it permits human nature to feel—when tossed and buffetted by the storm, keeps the mind erect and serene, even in the last extremity.

JUSTICE.

The Virtues we have been considering do not spring up immediately and necessarily from the active principles on which they are founded, as a plant does from its seed, bearing fruit of the same kind: for it must be evident that "if vice and virtue be matter of choice," and not of blind impulse, they must consist in voluntary actions.* But the voluntary actions which characterize the virtues in question, presuppose the exercise of a *Supreme regulating power* in the mind,—of moral Judgment or Conscience, the vicegerent of God himself, which sooner or later begins to exert its authority, and thus to point to man's chiefest good, by subjecting Appetites, Desires, and Affections, to the Divine will.

It has indeed been asserted by some sceptical writers, that Justice, of which I am now to treat in order, is an *artificial* and not a *natural* Virtue, approved solely for its utility; and deriving all its obligation from the Political Union. There seems, however, to be good reason for supposing that it is founded on *natural principles* like the rest.

* See Reid's Essays, v. ch. v.

It is certain that there is a natural principle of Attraction in man towards man, *i. e.* a principle of Benevolence, and, connected with it, Gratitude for favours. And it is equally certain that he is armed against injury by a strong instinctive principle of Resentment. The first leads him to do good to his fellow creature; the last is the root of Malevolence. "Justice fills up the middle between these two:" for it neither implies *favour* nor *injury*.* Now if there be no natural principle of Justice, there is a natural principle of Resentment; which amounts to the same thing. Because a notion of injustice necessarily leads to a notion of its opposite. In the language of Stewart, "Although there is no implanted principle prompting us by a blind impulse to Justice; there is a very strong implanted principle which serves as a check on Injustice; the principle, to wit, of Resentment, which is surely as much a part of the human constitution, as Pity or Parental Affection."†

Now, it is difficult to conceive that any rule can be more natural, just, or obvious to the unprejudiced mind, than that which imposes upon every man the necessity, obligation, or duty, of rendering unto others, what he would that others should render unto himself. He has within his own breast, when he coolly consults his reason and conscience, that criterion which determines the measure of what he owes to his neighbour: and if he would not that others should injure him he will not injure others; for he

* Reid's Essays, v. ch. v. † See Outlines, § 347.

may look for the same resentment which rises in his own mind against injury.

Dr. Reid has illustrated this point so clearly, that I shall avail myself of his remarks. "When a man's natural rights are violated, he perceives intuitively, and he feels, that he is injured. The feeling of his heart arises from the judgment of his understanding; for if he did not believe that hurt was intended, and unjustly intended, he would not have that feeling. He perceives that injury is done to himself, and that he has a right to redress. The natural principle of Resentment is roused by the view of its proper object, and excites him to defend his right. Even the injurious person is conscious of his doing injury; he dreads a just retaliation; and if it be in the power of the injured person, he expects it as due and deserved.

"That these sentiments spring up in the mind of man as naturally as his body grows to its proper stature; that they are not the birth of instruction, either of parents, priests, philosophers, or politicians, but the pure growth of nature, cannot, I think, without effrontery, be denied. We find them equally strong in the most savage and in the most civilized tribes of mankind; and nothing can weaken them but an inveterate habit of rapine and bloodshed, which benumbs the conscience, and turns men into wild beasts."*

* Reid's Essays, vol. 1, p. 511.

In conclusion, Justice is that branch of Virtue, which interposes its authority between the Benevolent and Malevolent affections, in regulating their activity, and influencing the conduct so as to render every man his due. It instructs him to be sincere, candid, and upright, to observe the strictest veracity and fidelity, and in all things to uphold the standard of probity.

In some of the ancient definitions of this virtue, Justice not only comprehended what is due from one man to another, but also the duties man owes to God, as his maker, preserver, and righteous Judge—the duties of love, obedience, and adoration.

Now, the several virtues, Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, and Justice, are only different forms under which the *same* controlling and regulating influence appears practically in the concerns of life,—in the conduct of rational and moral agents, who have power to choose either vice or virtue. But if Virtue, in the strict acceptation of the word, consists in resisting temptation, and Vice in yielding to it, it is clearly necessary that the power which determines the choice in favour of the former, should be sufficiently developed, in order to maintain the struggle; and it is not reasonable to expect that, in children, faith should conquer sense, so that, in their pliant and infirm minds, the *prospective* good of virtue should immediately outweigh the *present* appearance of happiness. Hence appetite, desire, and selfish feelings, appear at first to have the ascendancy in by far the greater number.

But in many, at a very early age—a period which differs considerably in different children,—we may perceive the signs of very acute moral perception on the side of virtue: and these moral perceptions have all the *greenness* and *liveliness* and *purity* which we see in the *young bud.* There is nothing of that coldness, and insipidity—that withered autumnal decay, which moral feeling is apt to assume in manhood, when it has been slighted and chilled, and its cultivation neglected;—a proof that these feelings are natural and not acquired.

Hence, it follows that the true ground-work of Virtue, as it respects the Appetites, Desires, natural Feelings, and Affections, must be sought for in the first openings and admonitions of that principle, which has been appointed the Governor and Director, and variously denominated the Moral Faculty, Conscience, the Divine Principle of Truth, the seat and throne of God in the mind. *This is the seed;* and the Virtues which have been enumerated, are branches from this root: they are not different seeds. For, *if like begets its like,* Virtue can have no congenial affinity with Appetite or Desire: and therefore the Appetites, Desires, and Affections, which need this controul, are not the *root* of virtue, but the *occasions* which call forth its exercise; without which occasions, we cannot even conceive the notion, much less the existence or necessity, of a virtuous action.

There is reason to believe that some of those writers, who used the expression *seeds of virtue,* gave

the word *Virtue* a more enlarged signification, and comprehended in it all those benevolent feelings, instincts, or impulses, of the human heart, which are in themselves and in their nature intrinsically good, and have a tendency to produce good fruit; such as kindness, parental and filial affection, gratitude, compassion, and friendship, as well as the pure principle of truth.

Dr. Hutcheson remarks, that Bishop Cumberland always uses the word *Benevolence*, to denote the internal spring of Virtue. But it is easy to see that our Appetites and Desires, having no relation to others, do not require a virtuous principle, in other words, a restraining power, whose sole object is the *good of others*, but a restraining power, whose sole object is *our own good*. Consequently, Benevolence cannot be considered the root from which every branch of virtue springs. Not but the good of individuals leads ultimately to the good of their fellow-creatures. The *seed* of virtue, is, however, deeper grounded than even in the love of man to man, which is only one of its shoots. It is grounded in the Divine principle of Truth.

The following passage from Lord Bacon clearly shows that virtue was taken in the enlarged sense to which I have adverted:—a sense comprehending not only the habitual exercise of the mind in the pursuit of what is good and praiseworthy, but the seed or fountain of all that is originally good and amiable in itself. Besides, this passage points to the important

fact I have incidentally noticed, viz. that goodness of nature is deeply implanted in the human mind.

" Goodness of nature, of all virtues and dignities of the mind, is the greatest, being the character of the Deity"—" The inclination to Goodness is imprinted deeply in the nature of man; insomuch that if it issue not towards man, it will take unto other living creatures."*

Bishop Butler says, " There is a natural principle of Benevolence in man"—" such a natural principle of attraction in man towards man that having trod the same tract of land, having breathed in the same climate, barely having been born in the same artificial district or division, becomes the occasion of contracting acquaintances and familiarities many years after:" and he concludes, that, " as any thing may serve the purpose," these and other " relations merely nominal, are in truth merely the occasions, upon which our nature carries us on according to its own previous bent and bias."†

It is far from my intention, in these and the preceding observations on vice and virtue, to enter into what may be called an analysis of the mind. I have thought it desirable to come at as clear an understanding as may be, of what is meant by the expression " seeds of virtue," used by so many critical and philosophical writers; and therefore have endeavoured to show upon what foundation some of the

* Bacon's Essays, xiii.

† Butler's Sermons.

virtues are built, as well as the true spring of virtue in the mind. I have endeavoured to show that this foundation is not laid by man; that the principles are within his own breast; and that all virtue must ultimately be resolved into the pure unbiassed dictates of the Conscience or Moral Principle as its root and source. Men may *differ* about names; and they may ascribe virtue to Reason, or to Self-love, or to Utility, or to Benevolence; or may have it to consist in conduct agreeable to the *Fitness of things*. But they are *agreed* upon the fruit: they know what is good and excellent in conduct; and, on the other hand, what is base and dishonourable. And, as under right influence (if it be lawful here to give virtue its full *Christian* acceptation) it elevates man to the perfection of his moral nature; they must acknowledge that, whatever be its source, *that*, which constitutes the true dignity of man, is not likely to be adventitious, or brought from *without*,—while every principle that has a tendency to degrade, is natural, or implanted *within*. They must still admit its intrinsic value. In whatever way, therefore, they connect it with other principles of the mind—the understanding or the heart—such as Reason or Benevolence, it is far above them all in excellence, and has an indefeasible title to the love and veneration of mankind. As Reason may shew itself without Virtue, Reason cannot be Virtue; and the same may be said of Self-love and Benevolence; for Reason may be cultivated to the highest pitch of natural discern-

ment, without one particle of virtue: and therefore whether philosophers will allow it to occupy its seat in the mind, on an independent footing, or by the mediation, support, and exercise of some other principle; it will assuredly establish its throne, wherever Piety, Humility, and Self-denial are suffered to prevail, with an authority which subjects Reason, Self-love, Affection, Sympathy, and Desire, to its government: But all this may be said, and perhaps more properly, of that seed or principle of moral emotion, from which alone true Virtue springs, and which has obtained many different appellations, of which CONSCIENCE is perhaps the chief.

SECT. III.

Of Benevolence and Self-Love.

Before I proceed to treat of Conscience and its supremacy, with its laws and modifications, and the various denominations under which it has passed, I am anxious to say a few words on the Benevolent affections, by way of attempting to remove from human nature the imputation of Selfishness, which has been thrown upon it in some celebrated systems of morals. It cannot be doubted, that there are in human nature implanted feelings of Benevolence, undefiled with selfish motives. But these benevolent feelings, in themselves, I am inclined to think, have no immediate relation to Virtue, because we see

some of them at times in the brute creation—the offspring of pure nature.

These Benevolent Affections display themselves in various ways towards others, as in parental and filial Affection, in Sympathy or Compassion for the afflicted and distressed, in Esteem and Veneration for the wise, generous, and good, in Gratitude towards our benefactors, in Friendship for those of kindred sentiments and feelings, &c.

Now, he must entertain a mean and contracted notion of human nature, who can see nothing in the kind impulse of these Affections, but a secret and selfish view to our own interest; making the ground of Attachment, of Generosity, and of the Social Union, to consist in the cold calculations of Self-love, and not in the warm unpremeditated feelings of natural Benevolence.

Every one of these impulses was given us by the provident Author of Nature, for claims of social good, which Reason would be too slow to answer, too cold to estimate, and too formal to fulfil.

Nay, we find that, in proportion as Reason obtains the ascendancy, subjecting thought and motive and action to rigid rule, feeling is superseded, and natural impulse becomes weak. The heart has then no voice, and is not permitted to dictate to the head. The warmth of youthful emotion is chilled by the caution of age. Liberality may indeed discover itself; but its offerings are like the tardy fruits which a rigid plant in some churlish soil is compelled to

yield by stubborn labour: while the other may be compared to those supplies which bountiful nature, in the warmth of a genial climate, pours forth in spontaneous abundance. However age and intercourse with the world may tend to chill these natural emotions, and to make considerations of interest enter into every act and motive; it is certain, that the warm-hearted youth has no conception that he is playing the game of Self-love, while he is acting under the influence of Pity, Gratitude, or Friendship, or submitting with cheerfulness to toilsome privations, for the support of a destitute parent.

When an anxious mother extends her numerous cares, and deprives herself of many comforts for the sake of her beloved offspring;—when a good Samaritan pours in the oil and wine to allay the sufferings of some afflicted stranger;—when a man is impelled by the ardour of feeling to rush into the flames or to plunge into the sea, at the risk of his own life, to rescue a fellow mortal from imminent danger;—when an act of unlooked-for kindness has made such an impression, that Gratitude swells in the heart and speaks in the language of sincerity from every feature, seeking every occasion to show the obligation more than to repay the debt,—can we believe that, in any of these instances, self-love, or the prospect of some advantage remote or near, is the spring of action; and would not the individuals, actuated by such Affections, turn with a natural surprise, mingled with amiable contempt, from any one, as though he were callous

to the noblest feelings of human nature, who would so far belie their motives as to insinuate that interest was their object?

When Speculation, for it does not deserve the name of Philosophy, will not hear the voice of nature, it leaves the straight-forward path that leads to Truth. But the voice of nature cannot be mistaken on this question; and therefore the Selfish System must be pronounced to be more visionary than true.

It must indeed be admitted that the Benevolent Affections are possessed in very different measures or proportions by different individuals,—in some, one or more of these active principles nearly absorbing all others,—in many, what is called *Goodness of Nature* making up the strongest feature in the character,—and in others, a seeming apathy throwing its shade over every social endearment. Yet amidst all the natural varieties, which this part of the mental constitution presents to our notice, an example of pure unmixed selfishness is almost anomalous in the human family. For I do not here speak of those miserable objects, who, by brooding over wealth have extinguished the sparks of generosity, and, to their far greater loss, have nearly smothered the sparks of virtue; like aliens from God and man, forsaking both, for *that* which was given them by their Maker, not as an idol to be worshipped, but as an instrument in their hands to benefit their fellow-creature.—Nor yet do I speak of those isolated beings, who, from whatever cause, by voluntary seclusion, and a studied morose-

ness, have perverted their best feelings so as to acquire an insensibility to social enjoyments, and almost a hatred of their species.

These are blots in the fair scheme of social order, swerving alike from human and from natural institutions, and alike disowned by humanity and by reason. They appear to serve no end in the creation, but as beacons, to warn others to shun the poison of corroding solitude, which dries up the fountain of social warmth and virtue in the heart; and to avoid the early tomb in which the votary of Riches buries, amidst his hoards, his usefulness and his best affections, becoming dead, as it were, to the world, before the appointed time when he is called upon to surrender for others' use what he has neglected to employ.

It seems to have been a two-fold error in the philosophy of Pope, that he made *Self-love* to comprehend the whole active principles on the one hand; and *Reason* to comprehend the regulating balance, check, and supreme authority, on the other. For, besides Self-love, if Appetite and Desire may be included in the term, we have the several disinterested Affections of which I have spoken, as springs of action: And besides the "comparing balance" of Reason, we have a still higher principle, Conscience, to preside and govern.

CHAP. VII.

OF CONSCIENCE AND ITS SIGNIFICATIONS,— INCLUDING REMARKS ON THE REASONINGS OF LOCKE ON INNATE MORAL PRINCIPLES.

SECT. I.

Of its comprehensive Signification.

FROM what has been last stated we may conclude that there is a principle in Man, to which all his Appetites, Desires and Affections, as well as his rational or intellectual nature ought to be subservient. For, as his rational or intellectual nature may be wholly employed in ministering to the indulgence of these lower propensities; seeing we have around us the proofs of system, skill, experience, knowledge, art, in numerous instances where the moral good either of individuals or of society is not even once presumed to be the ultimate object (and into all these combinations of means to ends Reason essentially enters,) it follows, that Reason itself must be subjected and sanctified by some higher principle. For, it is the very nature and business of the rational faculty to be occupied in the things of time; or, if it chance to contemplate the things of eternity, in

forming to itself speculative notions, which may prove altogether barren with respect to purity of conduct. But, in the subjection of Reason, its legitimate uses may still be preserved; seeing that in the best and wisest of mortals, sense and appetite, and desire and affection, may be lawfully exercised, without prejudice to moral and religious advancement.

It is observed by Dr. Beattie, and the remark illustrates the concluding observation of the last chapter, that "Conscience being proved to be the Supreme regulating Principle of human nature, it follows that virtuous action is the ultimate end for which Man was made." Without Conscience, or some analogous principle, it is plain, that there would be no internal guide to virtue—no judge of thoughts and actions, to approve or to condemn. It is, therefore, the power that constitutes man a moral and accountable agent, and virtue is its object.

Conscience, however, is a word which has been used in various senses; and though almost every one may seem to understand it, the precise meaning is far from being agreed upon.

I have already apprised my reader that, in an Essay of this sort, embracing a comparative view of different authors' opinions, and resting in the first instance on natural reasoning, he must expect to find a good deal of confusion and ambiguity, both in reference to such opinions and to the terms in which they are conveyed. These appear to be inseparable from all human efforts, by the light of nature, to pierce the

veil which hides the operation of supreme Power on the mind of man. But if by natural reason we can come to nothing clear and demonstrative, it may at least be satisfactory to show, by reference to the conflicting or various opinions of different authors, how far this light extends, and how little concerning moral truth and its source, the feeble lamp of reason really discovers.

In the use of the word Conscience, there appears to be considerable diversity, both as to its meaning and the precise relation it bears to the other faculties. Of this I shall attempt a more full explanation.

Some represent the Conscience to be a distinct faculty, synonymous with what is called a Moral Sense; others take it to be a modification of Memory, others of Reason; and some assign it the same place in moral perception, that simple consciousness holds in every natural operation of the mind. In the last sense it is the secret testimony or immediate knowledge, which the mind has in itself concerning the pravity and rectitude of its own thoughts, words and actions. This perhaps is its most correct etymological meaning: and it agrees best with Scripture.

Before I proceed further, it may be proper to notice two very different significations in which Conscience has been frequently employed, each of which has been sanctioned by eminent authorities. In the first of these it appears to stand as an *independent* principle: in the second as a simple modification of some other power, filling only a *subordinate* office.

In the one it is set forth as the *vicegerent* of God himself, legislating, controlling, judging, according to *immutable* truth: in the other it is said *to follow the judgment*, to receive its dictates secondarily from Reason, and to be as *variable* as climate, customs and local institutions can make it.

Bishop Butler and his followers advocated the doctrine of its supremacy alluded to in the first signification: the direct tendency of Locke's argument, in his work on Human Understanding, is to support the second.

In the writings of others it is made at once to hold its authority and independence, as the seat, throne, or umpire of God in the soul; and yet with some appearance of inconsistency, it is allowed to bend its rule to circumstances, such as customs and religious institutions, however various;—to lower its standard, so as to acknowledge inferior rules of duty, and yet, even in this state of comparative humiliation, to claim the respect due to some sacred and inviolable truth.

These are phenomena in the mental constitution that are worthy of examination: indeed, it is impossible to understand what is meant by the inviolability of Conscience, which every truly enlightened mind in the present day is willing to acknowledge, without some illustration of the principles according to which these seeming inconsistencies may be reconciled.

I shall proceed to give a few examples of the first signification.

"Mankind," says Bishop Butler, "have various instincts, or principles of action, which brutes have not; particularly Conscience."—"Conscience, compared with the other principles of action in man, plainly bears upon it marks of authority over all the rest, and claims the absolute direction of them all, to allow or forbid their gratification."—"To preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of Man, belongs to it. This faculty was placed within to be our proper governor, to direct and regulate all undue principles, passions and motives of action. This is its right and office: thus sacred is its authority.—Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world. As in civil government, the constitution is broken in and violated by power and strength prevailing over authority; so the constitution of man is broken in upon and violated by the lower faculties or principles within, prevailing over that which is in its nature supreme over them all." "Conscience does not only offer itself to shew us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide: the guide assigned us by the Author of our nature."

Milton has well described its dignity and office:

"And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom, if they will hear,
Light after light, well used, they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive."

"Conscience, Conscience!" exclaims Rousseau, in one of his happiest lucubrations: "*Divine Instinct, immortal and heavenly Voice, sure Guide of a being ignorant and limited, but intelligent and free, infallible Judge of good and evil, by which Man is made like unto God! It is thou that constitutest the excellence of his nature and the morality of his actions: without thee I feel nothing in myself that raises me above the brute, but the sorrowful privilege of wandering from error into error by the assistance of an understanding without rule, and of a rational faculty without principle.*"

Cowper also, who in many of his poetical flights had a deep and clear insight into true philosophy, as well as into sound Christianity, when speaking of the internal light of the wise heathen, expresses himself in the following words:

"Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
Celestial, tho' they knew not whence it came,
Derived from the same source of light and grace,
That guides the Christian in his swifter race,
Their Judge was Conscience, and her rule their law:
That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
Led them, however faultering, faint and slow,
From what they knew, to what they wished to know."

Cowper, Truth.

Dr. Reid nearly agrees with Butler in his description of this Power. "Conscience," he says, prescribes measures to every Appetite, Affection, and Passion; and says to every other principle of action,

'so far thou mayst go, but no farther!' It is evident, that this principle has from its nature, authority to direct and determine with regard to our conduct; to judge, to acquit or condemn, and even to punish; an authority which belongs to no other principle of the human mind.—It is the candle of the Lord set up within us to guide our steps." Essay 3. ch. 8. p. 310.

"It would seem," says Dr. Rush, "as if the supreme Being had preserved the Moral Faculty in man from the ruins of his fall, on purpose to guide him back again to Paradise; and at the same time had constituted the Conscience, both in man and fallen spirits, a kind of royalty in his Moral Empire, on purpose to shew his property in all intelligent creatures, and their original resemblance to himself."

Lord Bacon very clearly bears testimony—and a most important testimony it is—to the principle that "the light of Nature *not only* shines upon the human mind through the medium of a rational faculty, but by an *internal Instinct*, according to the law of Conscience, which is a sparkle of the purity of man's first estate." Most other writers, as Locke, make the light of nature to consist wholly in the deductions of a rational faculty, and set aside any internal light or instinct. But Bacon in this as in many other subjects, went deeper than some of the moderns, whose discoveries are *thought* to have superseded the penetrating views of that astonishing genius.

Pope evidently points to an original inherent right,

and not to any acquired authority of Conscience, in one of the stanzas of his Universal Prayer:—

"What Conscience dictates to be done
Or warns me not to do;
This teach me more than hell to shun,
That more than heav'n pursue."

Barclay says, "The Conscience of man is the seat and throne of God, in him, of which God is the alone proper and infallible Judge."

"The dictates of Conscience," says Beattie, "are to every good man the highest authority in matters of duty,—what more interesting than to know, whether his notions of duty and of truth be the dictates of his nature, that is, the voice of God, or the positive institutions of Men?" See Essay on Truth, part 1. ch. 2.

Blair remarks "That when Conscience threatens punishment to secret crimes, it manifestly recognizes a supreme Governor, from whom nothing is hidden. The belief of our being accountable to him arises *not merely from reasoning, but from internal sentiment.* Conscience is felt to act as the delegate of an invisible Ruler; both anticipating his sentence and foreboding its execution.—Conscience is the guide or the enlightening and directing principle of conduct." *Sermons,* 13 vol. I & 5.

From the foregoing citations, which, it will be seen, have a remarkable coincidence, (and their number

might be much increased) it appears that Conscience, *as its nature and office are thus defined*, represents a light, spark, faculty, or principle in the human mind of the very highest rank and authority: and that there is such a power is taken for granted by all without any shadow of doubt. Nothing appears but that it is an original independent principle, sacred and inviolable, because accountable only to God, and receiving its dictates *immediately* from Him. The only question is, to what degree of humiliation or depression it may be liable, from the general weakness and depravity of human nature.

The common opinion seems to be, that the Conscience, with every ordinary help internal and external, is not fully competent to ascertain its duties, (according to the Christian model of duty) without the written letter of Revelation. For it is known to be easily warped, and men are liable, from various causes, to be mistaken with regard to their duties. Where then is the ultimate criterion or standard,—in Scripture or in the mind? If in Scripture, What is the rule that binds those who are without it? If in the mind, Is Scripture to be undervalued and set aside?

Without the ground-work of Conscience (taking the term in its most comprehensive meaning) it is to be presumed, that Scripture would be a dead letter, wholly inapplicable to the state of man and unintelligible.—The *foundation* is therefore laid in the mind. But, without Scripture, the *superstructure* of Faith and Practice, with its accompanying supports, could

not be distinctly known. Yet, after all, outward knowledge, however perfect, is only *one* of the means of leading to inward purity. And it is for God alone to judge how far this outward knowledge by Scripture is essential to the great end of Life. Scripture is one of the purest and clearest streams that have ever issued from the fountain of divine Goodness, which has established a native spring of Truth and Virtue in every soul. The pure dictates of one cannot therefore oppose the pure dictates of the other: seeing their source is the same.

If we change the metaphor; the degree of light may vary according as one man has a greater measure than another. But the light of an apostle is not one thing, and the light of the heathen another thing, distinct in principle. They differ only in degree of *power, distinctness*, and *splendor of manifestation*:— and, so far only, does a Gospel truth differ from the natural unsophisticated moral rule of the untaught Indian, who sees the Majesty of Heaven in clouds and hears his voice in thunder.

In the descriptions of Conscience by the writers above quoted, its rule and authority are set forth without conditions or limitation, as the distinguishing and glorious privilege of man. It is considered to be the *Guide* of conduct, the *light* of the mind, the *candle* of the Lord, the *spark* of divine purity, the *throne* and *vicegerent* of God himself. It is not presumed that Education can do more than call it forth, by directing the attention of the mind to a hidden

treasure, and thus by cultivation improving it, like every other talent; but it is not implied, that its rule and light are of necessity to come from without. The spark is kindled by the Almighty; and man has to cherish it into a flame. The seed is planted by the Creator; and human vigilance must secure the fruit. If it were wholly dependent on others, it would be a rule and standard fabricated by man; or even if it were dependent on Scripture, although the medium might be of divine original, yet the source being removed, the benefits would be circumscribed, and millions would be deprived of the blessing.

If the moral rule and standard are wholly from without, how should it happen that the maxims imbibed are of so much more sacred and obligatory a character, than those of speculative truth conveyed by the same outward medium? For, there is an inherent authority in the pure Conscience which stamps its dictates with no *second-hand* commission. Scarcely any one speaks of it but as the power by which man holds *direct* intercourse with his Maker, and by which peace is whispered in the soul, or the bosom is stung with remorse, by an *immediate* divine influence.

It would be strange if, in all the *first* lessons taught by this principle, man should be the only teacher, and they should come by the outward ear; while in all the subsequent steps of its progress, the Almighty himself should exercise the government, and issue his mandate immediately from his own sanctuary. This is surely not consistent with the moral economy

of a Universal Parent, who acknowledges the inhabitants of the whole earth as his children; who is himself their only Judge; and who exacts no more service from any mortal than he has given ability to perform, nor a greater measure of obedience than he has afforded light and knowledge of duty. For, without presuming to anticipate the righteous decisions of a Being excellent in wisdom, confiding nevertheless in the faith of his own declarations, and moreover persuaded that the Gospel of Christ is the most glorious revelation of God's will to man;—I speak it with reverence—it is still possible that the scattered tribes of the human family most remote from civilized society, and least acquainted with the real condition of man, may rise up in judgment against the most enlightened; if the first obey the few precepts enjoined by their simple consciences; and the last, possessing all knowledge, all faith, and all Scripture, are yet wanting in their obedience to the light they have received.

But I am anticipating a discussion that is to follow in another place.

Enough is said to show that Conscience is usually taken in that latitude of meaning which comprehends the only principle by which man can have access to his Maker; and it directly involves the notion of natural or ordinary Revelation. And however it may include that knowledge of duty which properly belongs to the understanding, (which, it must however be allowed, agrees best with the etymology of the

word) it invariably includes that instinctive perception of vice and virtue, or moral beauty and deformity—that internal sense of right and wrong, prompting the will—which is implanted by the Deity, and is to be accounted the foundation of Morality and Religion.

Sect. II.

Of Conscience—its limited Signification.

When Conscience is stated to be an insufficient Guide without the light of Scripture, or independent of holy writ; and when it is also stated that different moral rules are held conscientiously sacred in different countries; it is evidently brought somewhat lower in our estimation as a regulating principle of the mind; in one case, requiring help which is often casual or incidental; and in the other, from an umpire and witness for God, being reduced to the state of an uncertain rule, that varies its standard according to the customs and local institutions of men.

Now, there can be no doubt that, by a law of our nature, the human mind may be brought to that state in which it shall regard as a sacred obligation what is *not* the dictate of immutable truth. And the fact proves two things—First, The facility with which mankind bind themselves to acts of supposed duty; and secondly, the docility with which they tacitly submit, or at least acknowledge, themselves to be creatures accountable to some invisible Supreme

Power. These are natural tendencies independent of all creeds, forms, notions, and modes of worship. And so far the existence of this Law may be safely affirmed.

But it is a very different thing to affirm that the variable moral maxims so received in different countries, are the dictates of the pure infallible principle of Truth itself; or, on the other hand, to contend that these variable moral maxims disprove the existence of such a principle altogether. I apprehend that neither of these conclusions can be drawn from a fair statement of the argument. It is, unquestionably, true, that the name of Conscience has been abused and applied to sanction some frightful enormities; and also true, that the purest principle of the soul—the light of life—the secret guide and unerring witness, may be slighted, resisted, despitefully treated, and, as it were, trampled under foot. But, admitting that this rightful Governor and King may at times *seem* to be absolutely dethroned, as in the complete anarchy of vice; or to be innocently drawn (as a royal prince surrounded from the cradle with crafty attendants) to give his sanction to many absurd usages; or to be laid asleep as the mind is given up to natural indolence and outward ease; or to be treated with studied neglect and despised, so that his voice is no longer heeded; or to be seduced to compliance with established forms, because practiced by near kindred and those to whom reverence is naturally due; or to be roused to acts of cruelty by the rage

of bigotry and fanaticism, or to acts of wild enthusiasm by mistaken zeal for the cause of religion:—though all these things may be done, and, some of them, under pretence of being done for Conscience' sake; they surely do not afford any good ground for supposing that the legitimate Sovereign is *really* dispossessed, or that the mind, in which so much moral disorder prevails, is all this while actually without a supremely wise Director and unerring Judge, provided the state of anarchy would admit its lawful interference.

Now it is not a little strange, that, because this principle does not first discover itself in every human being with a regular series of what are called practical principles or moral maxims, commanding implicit assent, and forbidding any deviation, its existence should be denied, and no other source of moral obligation admitted, than Reason, Education, or Scripture. It is strange that the only true basis on which Conscience can found its right to exercise dominion and prescribe the path of duty, as soon as ever the infant mind shall require its controul,—the basis of an inherent delegated power in the mind—should be overlooked if not discarded; and that it should be allowed to claim no other importance than what attaches to the promulgator of some casual, local, ephemeral, notions of duty; nor entitled to any other authority than what belongs to such a secondary and dependent station. It is strange that the latter, the only point which is weak, variable, and uncertain, in

the nature of Conscience, when it is really defiled with other principles, as I shall next explain, should be fixed upon as *that* which substantially characterizes it. Yet by these means of treating it, have some attempted to fritter away its inherent rights, and to leave it nothing but the mere shadow of authority.

The definitions I am now to notice, will, however, point out more clearly the grounds of the second signification of Conscience to which I have alluded;—a signification that has been already anticipated in some degree by the preceding remarks.

Dr. Fleming considers Conscience to be nothing more than a *Modification of Memory.* In a late work on the "Philosophy of Zoology," he remarks, that "By the help of memory we acquire an *astonishing quickness* of perceiving whether we act conformably or oppositely to the standard of duty"—and that "to the operations of memory in such cases, theologians apply the term Conscience, and others the Moral Sense." In coincidence with this notion he states that "the discovery of duty is an intellectual process,"—and yet that "the question, what is duty? in reference to its rules or standard, is one which unassisted reason cannot resolve." Hence, he concludes, "arises the necessity of a Revelation"—and "the Christian religion supplies this moral want."

Doctor Fleming here admits the principle for which we are arguing, that the question of *Duty* is one which *unassisted Reason* cannot resolve; and yet he

states that the discovery of Duty, is an intellectual process; placing *Reason* and *intellectual process* nearly in opposition.

He also admits the principle for which we are arguing, that *Revelation* is necessary to supply the moral deficiency in our rational nature: and yet it is plain that by inference he confines this revelation to the outward knowledge of Scripture.

The standard of duty, when it is sought to be discovered by an intellectual process, must of necessity vary with degrees of intellect, with notions of expediency, and with local institutions. But, it can hardly be supposed that any well-disposed mind is without a principle which is able to bring these changeable things into order—a still small voice which speaks to man in the meek and tranquil state of the soul, to comfort and direct the good, and often in the voice of thunder to alarm the guilty. Hence, it is only when Conscience is perplexed with the grand sophisticator, human Reason, or blinded by Passion, or opposed by the many impediments of Sense liable to be thrown in its way, that its light becomes obscure, and its rules uncertain and difficult to be ascertained. For, notwithstanding all the varieties of moral notions among men, there are still fundamental principles acknowledged by all, and which have been accounted as sacred, though men practice the contrary, from the foundation of the world.

When Barclay represented "the Conscience to be the seat and throne of God in the soul," and that it

was accountable to Him only, it seems probable that he included in the term the notion of the *Spirit of Truth* itself. But when he stated the proposition that "Conscience followeth the Judgment, doth not inform it," he was contrasting it as a natural power with this spirit or supernatural emanation, and considering the variableness of outward creeds and modes of worship.

Now, in this, there is less inconsistency than may appear. For, as it is said, that in the Conscience the voice of Truth is heard, Conscience as the *seat* is put by metonymy for the *power*. And further, if Conscience be simply the knowledge or inward testimony of the mind as to the rectitude and pravity of its own thoughts or actions, and consequent Judgment upon them according to some previous rule of duty (in whatever way this rule may be acquired); it is plain that this testimony or judgment may vary according to the degree of light and knowledge received: and thus Conscience may follow the judgment or opinion.

This it must be allowed is the common meaning of the word in Scripture: because the Scripture recognizes only one divine operative principle in man—the spirit of God—the light of Truth—the measure of Grace—the immediate revelation of the Divine will, &c. If Conscience, therefore, does not include this scripture principle, it simply means the testimony of the mind as above stated; or if these two meanings be discarded (as when the word Conscience is used by those called *Moral Writers*, in the comprehensive

acceptation of which I have given so many examples) it applies to some power of the mind of which we can have no possible conception either from Reason or Revelation, and as such may justly be called in question.

If we believe that the spirit of God, or a divine monitor in the soul, operates universally in man, when it is not slighted and resisted, we shall not easily make out the difference between *its* operations and those of what is called a *moral sense* or *natural conscience*, which prescribes to the heathen the path of duty, and at the same time excludes the two Scripture ideas just noticed. For, it will hardly be said that there are *two* principles, distinct in their nature, yet pointing to the same end; the one earthly, the other heavenly; the one a natural faculty, the other a divine principle; whose office and operation are the same:—small in the beginning—humble in the appearance—slow in the developement—improved by docility and obedience—heard only in the calm—in the storm of passion, silent or unheeded—not only premonitory in counsel, and checking in temptation, but swift in reproof for evil,—comforting the good even in affliction—goading the wicked with remorse—and ceasing to strive when constantly rejected.

Sect. III.

The Reasonings of Locke on Innate Moral Principles considered.

To the opinions of Locke I have already made some allusion: and as I have before hinted, it would ill become any one to make light of so great a name—an ornament to his country, a profound and candid philosopher, a devout and humble Christian, exemplary in his life and character.

His reasonings on the subject of Conscience and of moral distinctions; have drawn upon him, notwithstanding, the severe animadversions of some eminent authors. But whether he meant to imply all that is inferred from his writings, I will not take upon myself to determine. If his opinions be not correct, the errors of so good a man must be diffused as widely as his fame, and make an impression on the mind deep and lasting, in proportion to his virtues, and the depth of his understanding.

In so far as Locke considered Conscience to be "nothing else but our own opinion or judgment of the moral Rectitude or Pravity of our own actions;" his observations seem to be pertinent, and his reasonings on them conclusive. For, according to this meaning, Conscience may be said to follow the moral

rule or notion of duty in the mind (however it be acquired), to be directed by it, and to do nothing more than bear its secret testimony to the fulfilment or transgression of this rule. If this rule be misunderstood, or by any means perverted, Conscience will be perverted also. But there is another most important question relative to the origin, principles, and foundation of this rule itself. And when he undertook to prove that there was no other foundation for it than the light afforded by our own experience, and the labour of our natural abilities—a doctrine implied in these words and in his subsequent reasonings, that "without being written on their hearts, men may, by the same way that they come to the knowledge of other things, come to assent to several moral rules, and be convinced of their obligations"—"and that a man by the right use of his natural abilities may, *without any innate principles*, attain the knowledge of a God and other things that concern him"—and also that "some people are *wholly* without ideas of God and principles of Morality"*—consequently must be without any Conscience, so far as, by his own definition, principles of morality are concerned; he seemed to take a widely different view of the rights and supremacy of Conscience, as well as of the immutable foundation of moral truth, from those whose opinions are already quoted.

And when we add to this, the leading points of his system, that the human mind in its infant state is a

* Essay, Book 1, Ch. 4, § 12.

perfect blank, equally indifferent to good or evil, and without any seed or element of virtue; it is scarcely surprising that he should have appeared to some to overturn the basis of moral and religious obligation, by denying an innate source of moral sentiment, or implanted principle of duty,—by whatever name it may be distinguished—the name signifying little, if the fact be admitted.

It is indeed true that, to enforce his argument, he has collected a number of alleged facts, some of them of doubtful authenticity, from such obscure travellers as Garcilasso de la Vega, Thevenot, and Baumgarten, to prove the existence of certain moral enormities in different countries, practised, he says, "without the least remorse of conscience." And he argues that, seeing such atrocities are committed, there can be no internal rule of moral conduct—no standard of duty, natural to mankind, and therefore no universally acknowledged practical principles among men; some nations generally approving what others condemn.

But, admitting these reports to be true to their full extent, they would only show—what we have evidence of every day—the depravity of human nature: and we need only look to the uneducated rustic, the uncultivated Indian, the idiot, and the insane, for proof of man's moral imbecility, when he is placed in circumstances unfavourable to his improvement, or physically incapacitated for attaining it.

A seed thrown among rubbish will not grow and bear fruit; yet it does not cease to be a seed. And,

likewise, admitting the reasonings of Locke to be just, they would prove as much against the Gospel principle of Light and Truth, which is said to be given to every man to profit with, and to be a law written in the heart, as against the instinctive direction of a natural Conscience. For, it surely is not pretended that mere outward education can give the Spirit of God to man. It is incommunicable by man, unless under immediate inspiration, when he is employed instrumentally to call it forth, to increase its growth and power, and to shed upon it the dew of heaven.

Nay, as it will afterwards appear, the same reasonings would also prove against the existence of the faculty of Reason.

It was one thing to assert, what cannot well be denied, that, as man is constituted, he can adopt an inferior and variable rule of duty, and bring himself to abide by that rule, and make what is called a Conscience of obeying it; and another thing to maintain the proposition, that there is no moral principle implanted in the human mind distinct from Reason, that is, from outward observation: "For moral principles," says Locke, "require reasoning and discourse, and some exercise of the mind to discover the certainty of their truth." But if it be true of all moral principles "that they require reasoning and discourse, &c."—it must be true of the simplest as well as the most complicated, of the groundwork and elements, as well as of the elaborate system. Consequently the tendency of this argument is to

show that there is no innate principle at all, distinct from Reason, whose office it is to show the loveliness of virtue, and the hatefulness of vice, and to prescribe the path of duty. Such a notion is directly opposed to the numerous convincing testimonies above adduced from the wisest philosophers. It will be shown, how far it is opposed to the testimony of Scripture.

Locke admits that "a great part of mankind give testimony to the law of nature," and that "several moral rules may receive from mankind a very general approbation without either knowing or admitting the true ground of morality;" "which," he says, "can only be the will and law of God"—a will and law, according to his system, discovered either by reason or extraordinary revelation, and in no other way—that is, *partially* by reason and *more fully* by divine revelation. Yet, as if the law of nature could do nothing for them, he asks the question, after enumerating the moral enormities "practised in different ages and countries *without remorse of conscience*"—"where then are those innate principles of Justice, Piety, Gratitude, Equity, Chastity? or where is that universal consent that assures us there are such inbred rules?"——"There is scarce that principle of morality to be named, or rule of virtue to be thought on, which is not somewhere or other *slighted* and *condemned* by the general fashion of *whole societies* of men, governed by prac-

tical opinions, and rules of living quite opposite to others."

It may be noticed that through great part of the 3d Chap. of the 1st Book of his Essay, Locke takes for granted that all these enormities are practised *without remorse*, nay, with general unqualified assent, —such as, the uncondemned and unscrupled practice of exposing children to perish in woods by famine or wild beasts, "*among whole nations of the most civilized people*," and of burying them alive with their deceased mothers; among others, the killing their parents "without any remorse at all,"—among others, "the rearing up their own children to devour them;" among others, Revenge and Cannibal-appetite accounted their chief virtues; and even many whole nations without the vestige of an idea of God, without religion or any form of worship!*

Though we might be prepared to see a fearful picture of the depravity of human nature and to own its truth; and though the nations of the earth are deplorably sunk in wickedness, so that one is almost reluctant to step forward as the advocate of humanity to defend it from such a charge; yet the position, above stated, contains so strong a reflexion upon our benighted fellow-creatures—of the same origin with ourselves—the same blood—the same natural endowments, sympathies, and feelings—heirs, too, of the same glorious immortality; that I venture to think

* Essay, Book I. Chaps. 3 and 4.

few persons could be found who would give credit to one half of these rumours, without at least asking for proof upon proof of their authenticity. For, even if the evidence for acts so revolting to our feelings were ever so strong, one would still linger in the hope, and wish to believe, that they were not true. That I may notice no other than the last; even before the Christian era, Plutarch and Cicero both declared that there was no nation to be found upon earth so savage as to be without some conception of a God. Yet a Christian philosopher of the 18th century discovers that these illustrious heathens were wrong!—wrong in a vital principle of religion—the universal diffusion of the divine spirit among men—the cardinal point of Christian doctrine.

It is to be observed that these enormities are not spoken of as *casual* deviations from the rule of morality; they are not spoken of as practices for which the nations themselves might possibly assign some sort of reason, religious or civil, to justify their usages, and thus, by way of excuse, to cover the violation of some natural duty; which would itself show their internal sense and acknowledgment of those duties: but they are spoken of as practices universally approved among whole societies of men, the rule of virtue subverted, and that of vice passing current in its place, *without remorse, without conscience,* nay *with general consent.*

It would be almost as credible that whole societies of men might be found, who should systematically

agree to call honey bitter and wormwood sweet, as that, among whole communities, virtue should be accounted vice, and right and wrong should be rendered so indiscriminately acceptable to the *natural* feelings of the mind; even setting aside every consideration of the expediency and usefulness of virtue to society. For there is a natural congruity in virtue to the human heart, and an incongruity in vice; as there is a congruity in music to the ear, and in sweets to the taste.

We know that there are some human beings of *perverted* tastes and senses. But this is a state contrary to nature, or the original institution of things; and one might as well believe that whole communities should agree to fix certain agreeable or disagreeable qualities to the sensible objects in question, just as the humour of different societies might dispose them to vary these relations, as that mankind should be brought to consider gratitude under any circumstances hateful, and ingratitude amiable:—for this may be given as one of the examples of Locke's general proposition. Though man may sink himself below the brute in depravity, when he is actuated by vicious propensities, yet it is scarcely possible to believe that, in their cool moments, any tribes on the face of the earth should so completely and systematically mistake the distinguishing characters of right and wrong. *For it would be a libel against Reason,* as well as against Moral principle and Humanity; and if such a state existed, it would be as fair to argue

that such human beings were devoid of a rational faculty, because they acted so *irrationally*, as that they were without a Conscience or moral Principle, because they acted so *immorally*. But if the *first* impressions of virtue and vice are *equally* acceptable to the cool and unadulterated human heart, there can be no such implanted principle.

The admission of this author is, indeed, of some value that, "certain moral truths may be discovered and moral rules receive approbation among mankind *by the light of nature*." But, if this light of nature is not meant to include some knowledge, however obscure, of that eternal law of Righteousness, which requires a degree of natural revelation to unfold it, the previous admission will not much qualify the ground which Locke has taken, and is far from reconciling his conclusions either to Reason or Scripture. Locke does not deny that man may attain to a knowledge of his duty by the right use of his natural abilities. He affirms the proposition; and so far, it may be said, there is no just reason for opposing his argument. If, indeed, it was only a question whether the principles of morality are *innate*, or are discovered in a *secondary* way by some circuitous process of the intellectual faculties; provided it was acknowledged, that grounds were laid in the nature of man for their early discovery, and that they are by some means or other made known; we should not perhaps have much cause of disagreement. But, when he further asserts that whole societies of men may

arrive at adult age "*without any principles of morality at all,*" and are in the practice of vice *without remorse*, as if it were virtue; he maintains an opinion widely different from the former; which, it is humbly conceived, cannot be supported on any sound principles.

Therefore, in reference to his various comments on the word *Innate*, as applied to speculative and moral rules—a denial of which is made the ground of such alarming conclusions with regard to the foundation of morals—it may at once be conceded that they are *not* innate, and yet his inferences be questioned; it being plainly of little moment whether principles are innate, or they develope themselves according to certain determinate laws of the mind, when it is placed under the ordinary advantages of culture in human society. Hence though we admit all his reasonings, in proving the negative of innate principles, to be valid, we may justly question his conclusions, when he contends that whole societies are without any principles of morality at all. For, in making the latter assertion, he leaves the former ground of argument; and, in attempting to prove that men in society, in other words, come to the use of reason, (which he alleges to be capable of knowing right and wrong and of distinguishing vice from virtue,) are, notwithstanding, *without* these principles of morality; he evidently attacks the competency of Reason itself, and makes as little even of the light of nature, to which he before allowed some capability in the discovery of

moral rules. As all men have the light of nature, and the light of nature is said to be competent to the discovery of some moral principles, it follows that all men are to be considered more or less partakers of these principles; as much as they are to be considered partakers of the common principles of reasoning, which are the privilege of every rational being. To take away from a moral agent the very principles by which his moral accountability is only to be judged, is to take away an essential part of his mental constitution, and to make him in fact *not a man.* It would be impossible by any sound logic to prove that a moral agent could exist without moral principles; or a rational agent without rational principles; or a sensual agent without sensual principles; or an instinctive agent without instinctive principles; or a mechanical agent without mechanical principles. Therefore, if the principles are wanting, the agency is destroyed; and so far the essential character of moral, rational, sensual, instinctive, or mechanical, is lost.

It is plain, therefore, that any system, however clear and plausible its arguments, which goes to prove that whole societies of men are not moral agents, should be received with very great hesitation. When it can be proved that human beings are never visited by any monitions of conscience, then, indeed we must acknowledge they are in no way to be considered accountable for their actions. But a man bred up in society without conscience, is a being of

whom we can form no conception: and a conscience without some sort of moral principles is a building without any foundation. Therefore conscience is as essential to man as reason or sense.

Some men may indeed do violence to their natural feelings and sear the conscience, as they may blunt even the edge of appetite and cloy the senses; and others may lose their understanding, or like idiots may be incapable of reasoning at all. But he who cannot distinguish vice from virtue or right from wrong, and confounds the sacred distinctions of good and evil, as if they were mutable relations, has as diseased and perverted a moral perception, as he that reasons amiss may be considered to have a perverted use of his rational faculty, or he that see amiss has a perverted use of the organ of vision, or he that tastes amiss has a vitiated palate.

Hence, it would seem as consistent to believe, that whole societies of men should agree to overturn the understood relations of truth and falsehood, so as to think and act like so many madmen; or to put sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet, from some unaccountable and unnatural motive; as that they should agree by general compact to confound the distinctions of right and wrong, and to call evil good, and good evil.

We call custom arbitrary, and fashion changeable, and common sense revolts at their inconsistencies: but we turn with delight and confidence to the belief that there are pure unerring principles (whether a

man's rational or moral conduct is concerned,) which can regulate both one and the other according to a right standard; and that this standard is to be ultimately found *no where else*, but in his own unperverted and unsophisticated reason and conscience; just as the outward senses in their pure and natural state convey true and unperverted impressions to the mind of the qualities of external things.

If at any time the multitude, by passion, carelessness or ease, have been hurried away by preposterous usages, there have seldom been wanting among any people a few honest censors who have examined their own hearts, and discovered what was right, and raised their voices against the prevailing evil. Besides, however the multitude may *seem* to be carried down the current of popular opinion, without a thought of the immorality or absurdity of any practices amongst them; it is difficult to conceive that, as human nature is constituted, there are not some who now and then feel a secret wound. Is is not, however, dangerous to assume the negative? And is it possible for any philosopher to know that human beings are not visited by secret upbraidings for omissions and commissions, for unkindness and ingratitude, for ebullitions of passion and violations of faith and truth, even in the most savage state of society? And what are these upbraidings of a man's own heart, but the evidence and the effect of moral principles? Without them no human society can be imagined to exist. And, *therefore*, *we may with con-*

fidence presume, that there never was any human society without some sort of moral principles.

If the passages I have quoted from Locke on this subject, did not carry their own evidence of his meaning along with them, many might suppose that some unfair advantage had been taken in the selection. And I almost doubt whether I should have ventured to comment so freely on the writings of so eminent an author, if the way had not been in some measure opened before me. For, I do not believe that such men as Reid, Price, Stewart, Watts, Beattie, and others, would have made similar comments on the tendency of his principles, if these had not naturally led to conclusions unfavourable to, what the writers above named apprehended to be, the only sure foundation of morality and religion, viz. an implanted principle of Truth.

Sect. IV.

Conscience always includes the notion of a Moral Principle.

I have thus endeavoured to illustrate the two senses in which the word Conscience has been usually employed: in the one signifying an original principle, light, governor, or teacher—the internal propounder of the moral law and the guide of life; in the other a secret testimony and judgment of the mind, varying with its knowledge or speculative opinions, yet carry-

ing a sense of moral obligation, and agreeing with some acquired rule of duty, so as to condemn or approve as this rule is broken or obeyed.

Now, that man should have been constituted so as to hold fast even error with a kind of sacred attachment, is in itself a direct proof of an instinctive tendency in the mind to some sort of religious obligation. For, what is to be conceived of even an erroneous conscience, but of a secret testimony implying conviction, that whatever rule of duty has been adopted must be obeyed, and that punishment will follow disobedience? This secret sense therefore is the ground-work of moral accountability, and is no farther answerable for any subsequent speculative aberrations, than the perfect original structure of a good eye is answerable for all the errors of vision to which it is liable.

In the first sense, conscience appears to involve the notion of an internal legislator or propounder of an engraven law; in the second, that of a judge determining according to the knowledge of this law. There are various ways in which the law may be misapprehended; and various ways also in which the judge may be misinformed.

If the human mind were not on all hands beset with infirmities and with snares, with seeming friends and with cunning foes, the law would be always seen in its purity, and the judgment always sound. A man born and reared in the dark, is not called upon to give an account of things which he never saw. It

cannot be expected that any human being brought up in an impure moral atmosphere should be free from taint. Nor is it likely that amidst ignorance and barbarism he should escape delusion. If things were otherwise, the whole moral system would be changed. As it is, we cannot doubt that no man will be called upon to give an account of *fruit* or *increase* disproportioned to the talents he has received; nor for greater moral excellence than the light and knowledge put in his way will enable him to attain. Let us for a moment suppose, that all men under every variety of circumstance had the same clear notions of duty impressed upon their minds. This would certainly be a different dispensation from that under which we live. It has pleased the Divine Governor, to measure out Truth in different proportions to individuals. For all are not possessed of the same talents—neither are all called to the same service; and the labour and exercise of the diligent would be thrown away, if the indolent could know as much as themselves. Besides, that rule in the divine economy—at once the test and reward of obedience, would be set aside: that when a *little* knowledge of duty is well used, *more* is added in due measure; just as greater trust is reposed in the steward who has been found faithful. If all men were to see and know their duty alike, at what age should this knowledge commence? But it is known to be taken away from some who have resisted the light in their consciences. How is the supposed law of universal clearness in apprehending

duty, to be reconciled with *this* its temporary absence, with the entire want of mental cultivation, and with the unevolved state of the infant mind?

The fact, therefore, that the principles of the moral law are not in all men clearly developed in distinct characters, is no argument against its universality. We can hardly conceive the present moral government of the Deity to be compatible with such an unequivocal diffusion of its precepts. Yet on the other hand, we cannot doubt, from every thing we see, that there is a most impartial moral administration: and that the most enlightened has no room to glory over the most ignorant, but in his greater submission to his Maker's will, and greater prostration of body, soul, and spirit, before Him.

To turn from this digression, I may add, in allusion to the two significations of Conscience above noticed, that it appears in the first to involve the notion of a perception of the *heart* springing from an *innate* principle of moral accountability; and in the second a judgment of the *understanding* varying with degrees of *outward knowledge.*

I believe the latter meaning is more agreeable to the tenor of its use in Scripture, for the reason before assigned.

In one sense, therefore, it has a relation to the understanding. But Conscience, taken in whatever sense, universally presupposes, if it does not include, the notion of a Moral Principle.

I proceed to show that different writers have been aware of this.

Bishop Butler observes, that "it is manifest great part of common language and of common behaviour over the world is formed upon supposition of a moral faculty; whether called Conscience, Moral Reason, Moral Sense, or Divine Reason; *whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart, or which seems the truth, as including both.*"*

Dr. Reid also states, that "the moral faculty or Conscience, is both an *active* and an *intellectual* power of the mind." "By it solely we have the original conception of right and wrong."—"The bulk of mankind cannot follow long trains of reasoning."—Conscience commands and forbids with more authority, without the labour of reasoning.—The Supreme Being who has given us eyes to discern what may be useful and what hurtful to our natural life, has also given *us this light within*, to direct our moral conduct."

Dr. Reid has not explained very clearly in what respect he considered Conscience an intellectual power.* His definition refers to the *first* signification.

Dr. Rush has made a very marked distinction between the *moral faculty* and *conscience*, as he conceived the one to relate to the heart, and the other to

* Inquiry on Virtue.

† Essay 3. Ch. 8.

the understanding, in the following passage. "The moral faculty," says he, "is to the Conscience what Sensation is to perception. It acts *without reflection*, while Conscience follows with deliberate steps, and performs the office of a *lawgiver* while Conscience performs the office of a *judge*: it exercises itself on the actions of others, while Conscience confines its operations only to its own actions: and the will (as the source of all the active powers) may be accounted the seat of the moral faculty, and the understanding the seat of the Conscience."*

The only difference between Dr. Rush's definition and that of others, I suppose to be, that he confines the use of the term *moral faculty* to what I have considered as the first signification of the word Conscience, and the latter expression to denote the second.

The philosophy of Dr. Paley is grounded so much upon the system of Locke, that I have scarcely thought it necessary to advert to it. Some advocates of Paley's doctrines have, however, alleged that, if he did not deny, he made little account of a moral principle, and I have heard his authority quoted against the opinion.

I will not take upon myself to say what direct inference is to be gathered from his "Moral Philosophy" on the question: the passages I shall select must speak for themselves. But I am very sure that

* See Influence of Physical Causes on the Moral Faculty.

what he says in his Sermons bears the most satisfactory testimony in favour of the argument I am supporting.

In the conclusion of his Chapter on the Moral Sense, he says, "Upon the whole, it seems to me, either that there exist no such instincts as compose what is called the moral sense, or that they are not now to be distinguished from prejudices and habits; on which account they cannot be depended upon in moral reasoning."—And further, "In a word, when almost every thing else is learned by *imitation*, can we wonder to find the same cause concerned in the generation of our moral sentiments?"

The following extracts from his Sermons seem to speak a different language.

"It being confessed, that we cannot ordinarily distinguish at the time the suggestions of the Spirit from the operations of our minds, it may be asked, how are we to listen to them? The answer is, by attending *universally* to the admonitions within us.—Men do not listen to their Consciences. *It is through the whisperings of Conscience that the Spirit speaks.* If men then are wilfully deaf to their Consciences, they cannot hear the Spirit. If hearing, if being compelled to hear, the remonstrances of Conscience, they nevertheless decide, and resolve, and determine to go against them; then they grieve, then they defy, then they do despite to the Spirit of God."—"He that misuses or abuses the portion and measure of spi-

ritual assistance, which is afforded him, shall lose even that."

"Is it superstition? is it not on the contrary, a just and reasonable piety to implore of God the guidance of his Holy Spirit, when we have any thing of great importance to decide upon or to undertake."

"Conscience, our own Conscience, is to be our Guide in all things."

According to Hutcheson, "Conscience denotes primarily the sense of right and wrong: or at least this sense is necessarily included in every notion of Conscience; without which no form of virtue and vice could be discerned."

It is evident that the great Apostle of the Gentiles distinguishes the law written in the heart from the conscience which bears witness to the obedience or transgression of this law. "For when the Gentiles who have not the law (of Moses) do by nature the things contained in the law; these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; who shew forth the work of the law written in their hearts; their Conscience also bearing witness; and their thoughts, or reasonings (λογισμων) accusing or else excusing one another."

He distinguishes the Conscience, taken in this sense, from the Gospel principle of light and truth. And, in as much as the Conscience, though weak, might be obedient to the light it had received, he was cautious of offending the weak conscience of his inexperienced brethren; and seemed indulgent even

towards those, who, while they acted conscientiously, erred only through ignorance. But a higher rule than any which outward Conscience could afford—the revelation from heaven through the spirit of Truth, was the only foundation on which this dignified teacher and his fellow-labourers built their assurance, "that they had a good Conscience;" and that "in simplicity and godly sincerity, they had had their conversation in the world."

Now, if Conscience be simply the knowledge or testimony which the mind has in itself of its own state, it is clear that this testimony must be built upon some primary rule or law previously admitted: and it is liable to vary, as the complexion of the mind in different societies among different nations, from early or acquired habits, may vary the rule of conduct. Conscience therefore, in this acceptation, does no more than point out to the mind its real state, according to the *light* it has received. If this light be small, Conscience is weak; if this light has been faithfully obeyed, it is pure; if this light has been transmitted through a false medium, so as to distort the natural appearance of things, Conscience is erroneous or perverted; if it has been wantonly disobeyed, it is evil. Hence, Conscience is also said to be defiled, hardened, seared, benumbed.

But, putting it for the mind, an evil Conscience may give a true and correct testimony of an evil heart, as a pure Conscience may utter the language of peace, and be void of offence, and a seared Conscience may

denote a mind hardened against the impressions of guilt. So that, the Conscience, in itself, may be a faithful monitor, though the soul be impure: and the impurity, as is often the case in Scripture phraseology, is transferred from the mind generally to the witness of the mind. Of this we have a remarkable instance where "the light of God" is said "to become darkness"—which in itself, or morally, is impossible: but, the mind may become darkened in which otherwise the light of heaven would shine. In this sense, with reference only to the treatment it receives from man, the *Spirit of God* may be *despised* and *put to shame, quenched, resisted;*—the *truth of God, changed to a lie,* and the *word of God corrupted,* as it regards the state of the heart and soul:—but, in itself, this Spirit, Truth, Word, (which is one and the same thing) is invincible, incapable of any thing but glory, immutable, and incorruptible.

I shall conclude these illustrations with a passage from Dr. Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments; which, while it supports the limited acceptation of the word Conscience, passes by, as a point not quite settled among men, the name of that Power, which Conscience always supposes, and which is acknowledged to be the internal Sovereign of the mind.

"The word Conscience *does not immediately denote* any faculty or moral sense by which we approve or disapprove. Conscience *supposes indeed the existence of some such faculty,* and properly signifies our consciousness of having acted agreeably or contrary to

its directions. When Love, Hatred, Joy, Sorrow, Gratitude, Resentment, with so many other passions, which are all supposed to be the *subjects* of this principle, have made themselves considerable enough to get titles to know them by, is it not surprising that the *Sovereign* of them all should hitherto have been so little heeded, that, a few philosophers excepted, nobody has yet thought it worth while to bestow a name upon it?"

The fact is, that by some it has been called Conscience, by others Moral Sense, by others the Light of the World, the Divine Principle of Truth, and the Spirit of God in the Soul.

CHAP. VIII.

OF THE TRUE SOURCE OF MORAL SENTIMENTS; AND OF THE VARIOUS OPINIONS RESPECTING A MORAL PRINCIPLE.

SECT. I.

Of Moral Feeling, the source of Truth.

IT has been laid down in this Essay as a position of some importance, that there is a power or faculty, viz. the Conscience or Moral Principle, (by whatever name it may be distinguished) and that it is the root and ground-work of virtue. It has been also admitted, that moral sentiments do not appear as early as some other principles in children; and are liable to be perverted by custom, and changed by education.

From these admitted facts, however, some have contended that there is no moral sense, nor other guide and rule of conduct, than the imperfect instruction of Reason, by, what is called, the light of nature, on the one hand, and the clear discovery made by

Scripture on the other: Hence, according to this view, Reason is the only guide to those who have no access to Scripture. But it was also held by Locke, that man received his knowledge of right and wrong by observation, or from without; at least that he had no certain criterion in his own breast distinct from Reason, to inform him of these distinctions; and a still stronger point was even urged, that scarce a virtue could be named, (excepting those which are necessary bonds to society) but, in some parts of the world, entire communities were agreed in setting it aside, and dispensing with its obligation, as it were, by universal consent; and, conversely, scarce a vice, which in some place or other, did not rise into the dignity of a virtue: for, one position seems to be a natural consequence of the other. So unprovided, it was to be inferred, was man with any moral instructor in his own breast; and so mutable were all moral distinctions; therefore, so *little* depending upon any original feelings of the mind; and so *much* depending either upon the outward proof that virtue was in itself profitable, and vice the contrary, (which is a deduction of Reason); or on the persuasion, derived from Scripture, that it was the Will of God, and consequently a rule of conduct. It is obvious, that FEELING, or an internal source of moral emotion, is entirely excluded from such a system.

Some reasons have been already assigned in opposition to this argument; and it has been urged that when the genuine features of moral conduct, in other

words, the various actions arising from Gratitude, Integrity, Justice, Fortitude, Benevolence, and their opposites (which we suppose must enter into the vocabulary of all languages) are fairly brought before the uncorrupted and unprejudiced view of the mind—they are discerned as clearly to be virtuous or vicious, praiseworthy or blameable, and right or wrong, by an internal sense or moral tribunal; as sounds are discovered by the *unobstructed* ear to be harmonious or discordant, or as objects of sight are seen to be beautiful or otherwise by a *sound* eye—without mote or film—when looking through a clear medium with a steady light.

For, as many things are necessary, in the natural state, to perfect outward vision, and in fact to clear perception, by any one of the outward Senses; so many things are necessary, in the moral state, to a correct moral judgment.

But, as we do not consult Reason to know whether an object is beautiful, or a flower is fragrant, or a fruit is sweet; so neither do we use it in feeling the first emotions excited by the moral qualities of human actions. By the constitution of our minds we are compelled to feel certain emotions in perceiving these actions; for which we can give no other explanation than this, that it is a law imposed upon our nature. That we may pervert this original law, is very true; and that we may reason and rebel against these feelings so as to reduce, change, corrupt, stifle, and almost annihilate, until we scarcely know what they

were originally, is also certain. But their universality proves their common origin; and that they belong as much to human nature, as taste or smell; which are liable to be corrupted as well as the primary emotions in question. These emotions strike us at once without a long previous inquiry; and we pronounce judgment at once; though an investigation of Reason may sometimes be necessary in order to show that the moral actions we contemplate, are in reality such as they *appear* to us. If they are *not*, our moral judgments may be qualified, and heightened, or softened, according to the intention or demerit of the agent. For a man may inadvertently do an act of apparent inhumanity, when in the pursuit of a benevolent purpose. And the moral feeling may in itself be correct, which condemns him upon that presumption. But, though it be a correct decision, according to the knowledge of the case, it may not be correct absolutely, if it gives judgment upon insufficient data. Hence, the knowledge of the case, in other words, of the real intentions of our fellow-creatures, being often imperfect, from our own short-sighted vision, we are instructed not to condemn too hastily; and from this view, a door is opened for the extension of much mutual charity. We may therefore *vary* our moral sentiments of the case, according to our more perfect knowledge of the circumstances, without any variation in the rule or standard itself. Here it is that reason assists the moral perception, with regard to the actions of others; but with regard to our own,

we are too often blinded by self-delusion, and make Reason a party strongly in our favour, against the remonstrance of Conscience, or moral principle.

Now, as it is not by man or any of his institutions that the eye is formed to see, and the ear to hear, and the tongue to taste; so it is not by man or his institutions, that the heart is formed to feel moral approbation and disapprobation. And as the qualities of sensible objects have an original congruity or incongruity to the fabric (what if I say the *taste*) of the several organs, antecedent to their use and inherent in their very structure, so as to affect these senses with agreeable or disagreeable sensations: so the moral qualities of actions, whether our own or of others, convey to the unsophisticated heart of man certain emotions which constitute the primary source of our ideas concerning vice and virtue.

And it is upon this foundation, (excluding the light of Scripture on this point from our reasonings) whether the mind be warped by prejudice, or blinded by passion, whether truth be obscurely or clearly seen, whether it be unfolded by distinct propositions or not, whether man attends to the cultivation of his hidden treasure or neglects it;—upon the foundation of truth itself, (the seeds of which are laid in his soul to withstand the corruptions springing from his nature) that we are taught to believe morality and religion can alone be built; and from the general survey of the human race we have every reason to think, that in his very lowest estate, man is not left

without a moral guide, lawgiver and witness, manifesting itself by some more or less obscure indications.

It is true, that the most excellent seat in the mind is liable to be usurped by many inferior principles struggling to obtain the mastery: for, in the breast of a single individual, principles are at work analogous to the turbulent and conflicting principles acting in a community; some attempting to deceive with plausible pretences; some to seduce with the allurements of pleasure, and to drown suspicion in the lap of ease; some secretly to undermine; some violently to overturn,—all aiming their attacks at the very power that would keep them in order, and establish a beautiful harmony. And, so much liberty is given to the will of man, too often they carry on their machinations with effect; so that lawful dominion is subverted. And it is this state of anarchy—this subversion of the moral principle, when good is put for evil, and evil for good, and when even reason itself is conspiring with, and heading the usurpation of, vice against virtue, that some philosophers have told us, we are to consider man is originally placed; and that he is *constitutionally* without any legitimate internal Ruler. As if it were argued, that because the reins of government were taken away, there had never been a lawful sovereign; or because the garden of the mind, like an uncultivated waste, from neglect, was overgrown with weeds, no good seed had ever been sown there. This would surely be considered

very inconclusive reasoning; and as inconclusive to maintain that any moral agent, obviously endowed by the constitution of his nature, with *opposing* principles, should nevertheless be unable of himself to discriminate between their effects, and to know the good fruits from the bad, by any light or law of his own mind. Certainly, upon the principles laid down by these philosophers, that virtue may pass current for vice, and vice for virtue, among whole societies of men, this internal knowledge must be rejected.

For, say they, where will you find those universal moral maxims, those innate practical principles, those clear self evident truths and propositions, which must necessarily be proved to exist, if man is to be directed by the light of his own mind? But, to this it may be answered, that every principle, talent, faculty, or power given to man to profit with, is given him at first only as a rudiment or seed. And this may be called the *seed of Truth*, though it be not, in the language of Watts, as a perfect proposition in the mind.

As a general rule pervading the natural and moral system, it may be observed, that, in the beginnings of all created things, endowed with capabilities of enlargement and improvement, it has pleased divine Providence to disclose nothing to human research, but *general outlines* and *general tendencies*. And though there be a general resemblance among mankind, both in lineaments and character, over all the world and in every age, yet there are individual, local,

and national peculiarities; so that two minds are not more exactly alike than two faces or two leaves. Now, with regard to the foundation of speculative and moral maxims, none of the original tendencies are laid down in precise and determinate rules, like an innate code of laws hung up for constant inspection, and applicable to every case of conduct, and to every outward situation of life, without labour and inquiry. The truths of Christianity itself were not ushered into the world in the form of a precise code of formal rules. The Gospel inculcated *principles*, not details, to reform the heart, more than to instruct the head. So far, the analogy of Christian doctrine to the natural and moral system is complete.

But though man does not receive from his Maker, either speculative or moral maxims, as rules of judgment and of conduct, like so many perfect innate propositions enforcing assent in his very infancy; yet he has received that constitution of mind which enables him to form to himself the general rules, or first principles on which religion and science must be built, when he allows himself those advantages of cultivation and exercise which every talent he possesses absolutely requires. And this is all that is pleaded for; and it is sufficient for the end. Nor is there any thing either *mystical*, or *unphilosophical*, or *unscriptural* in the notion. For if the proposition be not strictly innate, it arises from an innate power, which, in a sound mind, cannot form a proposition in any other way that will harmonize with enlightened reason and

purified moral sentiment, than in that to which the natural bias of the mind leads.

Sect. II.

Moral Truth is not unfolded with universal *clearness.*

We come, then, to this fact, in the present state of man, acknowledged and to be deplored, — proof enough of his natural weakness and need of help— that the dictates of truth and knowledge of duty are not unfolded with universal clearness, nor imparted in all states of the mind and under all circumstances, with that convincing evidence which commands implicit assent, and wholly excludes error.

Truth, like an object before the natural eye, sometimes is seen dimly; sometimes it is distorted; sometimes other objects intervene; sometimes it is enveloped in darkness; sometimes the organ itself is blind, and cannot see; sometimes the reflecting orb of Reason eclipses the true light of the mind. These are conditions which attach to mortality—to frail and imperfect man; they belong to the infirmity of his nature—conditions to which not only the senses but the nobler faculties are liable, in this state of being.

Truth is a ray of practical wisdom, which man must not expect to see, in the storm of passion, nor in the lap of sensual indulgence, nor in the false light or mist of prejudice, nor in the darkness of ignorance,

nor under the veil of self-deceit, nor even in the dreams of enthusiasm—the delicious extacy of fancy's brightest visions, nor on the mountains of speculation, where human reason tries its own strength in drawing it down as it were from the fountain of light itself.

Truth is found in the pure sunshine of the soul, in the low valley of humility, the retreat of calmness and peace, where all storms are at rest; by those only who seek it with earnestness and patience; by the simple in heart, who endeavour to subject their wills and affections to the will of their Maker. No man can *command* its presence; not even the best. And whoever hath it and uses it not to profit, possesses it to his condemnation. So that the mere knowledge of divine things, by whatever means obtained (even by the ministration of Angels) is worth nothing, if it is not obeyed. Is it possible then for man to find it by the exercise of a faculty, which in its pride and elevation, is ever more disposed to say like the haughty Assyrian, "By my own arm I have done it," than in prostrate meekness to petition for divine help—a faculty which, it need not be told, is often the first to challenge and doubt the appearance of Truth itself; so as almost to set itself in array against Omniscience, and to ask for demonstration when *heart-felt evidence* is all that in the nature of things can be offered?

I speak of Truth—the living water from God's throne—the pure manna from heaven, food of an immortal spirit—the ray of divine effulgence which can

alone enlighten the imprisoned soul with true light:—of that truth, the formal object of Faith, an internal sense God only can awaken; which no man can give his neighbour, but under the same influence with which God himself would give it; and therefore which has its source, by immediate Divine influence, in the very inmost recesses of the heart.

I do not speak of natural truth, chemical, mechanical, geometrical or astronomical, the object of physical science, nor of formal propositions, moral, political, or religious, cognizable by speculative reason, however good and excellent in themselves; which it is possible for human power to attain by intellectual labour, without a single thought of the divine Author, merely from outward observation; whose source is therefore external.

Is it the speculative philosopher, who only possesses Truth? How comes it, then, that of all men speculative philosophers differ most among themselves; each claiming it and each denying it the other? But Truth, as above explained, is not a thing which can be divided, as it were, by argument, and a morsel given to each disputant for his reward; or to be carried off as an exclusive prize by the high-minded exulting victor. It is one and indivisible; which a man may have in greater or less measure, and more or less complicated with error; but is the same thing in all,* and consists not in mere outward opinion. It

* "From hence it comes to pass, that Truths, though they be in never so many several and distant minds apprehending them, yet they

has a root whose vitality is maintained from another source, to which, opinions, never so correct, cannot immediately supply one drop of nourishment, notwithstanding such opinions may ultimately lead the mind, by various channels, to draw its own supplies from the divine fountain from which Truth is primarily and essentially derived.

Disputation may cloud the mind, but it seldom elicits the true spark. When men, therefore, dispute, though it is important that the conscience should be bound by sound opinions, and very important to attain them, yet the effect of disputation is not in either side the immediate possession of soul-sustaining virtue; unless it be the contest of meekness, purity, innocence, supported by Truth itself, against, violence, persecution, pride, led on by wickedness. It is not in the nature of things for the pure in heart to wrangle with each other about that which they individually possess. Truth knows its own, and has a concord with its own. For light cannot oppose the light.

are not broken, multiplied or diversified thereby; but they are one and the same Individual Truths in them all. So that it is but one Truth and Knowledge that is in all the understandings in the world. Just as when a thousand eyes look upon the Sun at once, they all see the same individual object:—so in like manner, when innumerable created understandings, direct themselves to the contemplation of the same universal and immutable Truths, they do all of them, but as it were, listen to one and the same Original Voice of the eternal Wisdom that is never silent."—*Cudworth concerning Morality*, page 258.

Sect. III.

Of the Diversity of Religious Notions among Mankind.

The tendency to moral obligation, if we may not call it a practical principle, is a law firmly inherent in the mind, exclusive of any particular creed or form of religion; and may be said to constitute an essential part of its nature. This tendency operates so as to make individuals religiously tenacious of apprehended duties (provided they do not cast off all *moral* restraint, as each has the power to do, by wilful disobedience); whether these duties may be justly imposed or be derived from perverted modes of education. It even exerts itself in enforcing obedience to the authority of rules, which in themselves may be insignificant or absurd; yet being objects of this inherent law, they not only acquire the force of undoubted truth, particularly if impressed in early age, but are regarded as if they were of sacred obligation. Like the tendrils of the vine to its support, they adhere so closely to the first objects presented to their embrace, that they are afterwards separated with difficulty from the list of indispensable duties.

This, surely, is an important feature in the human mind; and leads at once to an inquiry into the nature

of that law by which the observance even of *trifles* may be regarded as if they were matters of weighty concern. It is an anomaly in that system, which refers all our Ideas to Sensation and Reflection: and there is not a power of the mind but that above noticed, which is considered to be the foundation of morality and religion, that can explain the operation, or give rise to the phenomena, of the law in question.

If we may presume to dive into the secrets of final causes, we may perhaps conclude that it was established to circumscribe the human mind within certain limits of moral accountability to some *invisible* Supreme Power. This is offered as the simple deduction of natural Reason, in looking at the state of all those nations termed savage, and of the most degraded of our fellow-creatures. If a Conscience is set up and calls to account for certain actions — whether these actions in themselves be blameworthy or not — it is plain that religious obligation, including the reference to a moral governor, follows as a matter of course.*

Superstition is one of its effects, when the mind is

* I notice with pleasure a passage in the work of Dr. Prichard on Diseases of the Nervous System, illustrative of the same idea. "It seems," says this learned author, "that a certain persuasion of moral demerit, or delinquency, has been an universal impression upon the minds of men in all ages. With this is intimately connected the idea that they are accountable beings, and that there are certain unseen powers, before whose tribunal they may, and probably will, be arraigned."

See Treatise on Diseases of the Nervous System, by *J. C. Prichard*, M.D. p. 375. Chap. ix. Sect. 5.

ill-informed and ill-directed; as Piety is the other, when it has been duly enlightened and wisely directed. And Idolatry, Fanaticism, Bigotry, Intolerant Zeal, and the Immolation of human victims as a religious rite:—whence do they arise but from the crooked and perverse operation of this propensity, when it is acted upon and roused by the vilest of human passions? And hence we see the lamentable abuse of a principle which, when rightly directed, does honour to human nature, enlarges the sphere of active benevolence, and tends to the Creator's glory.

Now this law, propensity, or habit of the mind, which imposes self-condemnation when we might have peace, and do naturally aim at peace, and as naturally shun every thing that excites internal trouble, is, to say the least, a very wonderful institution. By no legitimate inference can it be said to follow from education; nor could it ever have been imagined *a priori* to arise from an *acquired* standard of moral rectitude.

An acquired standard of moral rectitude, if the mind had no internal principle of moral accountability, would require its followers to lay their cases for decision, before its tribunal, with as much coldness, formality, and heartless insensibility to the distinctions of vice and virtue, as cases are ever laid before some inferior outward court of justice. How different is this from the manner in which the moral principle, awakened to its duty, makes its decisions! There is here no coldness—no formality: all is warmth and

emotion! The process is as animated as if the law sprung at once from an internal lawgiver who had no subordinate commission to administer justice; but proved his authority, by the rapidity of his decisions, to be derived from an original fountain of Truth.

Hence, under all its various forms in various countries, if the fulfilment of an act of supposed duty be made matter of Conscience, remorse or satisfaction follows in the mind, as the necessary consequence of compliance or disobedience.

This simple fact indicates an original propensity to follow some path of duty. Our Senses may be deceived; our Reason may be deceived; and likewise our Moral perceptions may be obscured and distorted. But we do not deny that there may be correct observation by the Senses, and that their testimony ought to be relied on; we do not deny that there is a reasoning faculty because we are liable to reason amiss: neither should we deny the existence of an internal monitor and guide of conduct, because there may be variations in one country from what are the received notions of duty in another. Notwithstanding every thing that has been said to the contrary, it has been the opinion of some of the wisest men, that there are some fundamental truths in all the various systems of faith in the world, which claim the approbation of mankind in every nation. It is presumed that no practical opinions are so entirely absurd and revolting to human nature, as not to be mixed up and implicated, if I may so speak, with these fundamental

Truths; by which alone they gain credit and recommend themselves to the understanding. *Unmixed* error, in judgment and moral feeling, is not to be recognized in any people upon earth.

The Mahometan, the Hindoo, the African, the Chinese, the Indian, the Carib, the New Zealander, the Samoeide, the Tartar, and the Egyptian, notwithstanding the variety in their outward creeds, from early usages and modes of education, and notwithstanding the perverse notions they severally entertain; yet have they some common original principles regulating their society both public and private, which are accounted sacred amongst them, and entitled to the reverence of mankind,—principles of justice, honesty, veracity, faith, gratitude, humanity, benevolence, affection, sympathy,—as well as of devotion to some Supreme Power, and regard to the obligations of Conscience.

Even if we look at the nations professing Christianity, few in comparison with Mahometans and Pagans, what do they exhibit? The speculative notions which they entertain, although they go so far as to produce in some cases embittered hate, and even to excite the worst affections, yet they do not prevent the display of moral and religious feeling and the acknowledgment of those duties which are common to Humanity. But Christians profess to have their rules laid *clearly* before them, and hence are less excusable than some others. It must therefore be allowed that *some* speculative differences do not

wholly extinguish the original sparks of truth and virtue. For, upon the same ground, one Christian nation might as well deny to another those general principles of morality and religion above stated, because they differed in some speculative points of doctrine, as to deny them to the darkest heathen nations, because they worshipped the Universal Parent in the sun or cloud, or prostrated themselves before dumb idols, reptiles, and beasts, through outward ignorance of His Great Name.

But how greatly is the opponent to Christianity off his guard, when he makes the speculative quarrels among Christians a ground of argument against this Divine system, and the reception of its pure principles; and, placing its sublime precepts on a level with those of other religions merely notional, refuses to avail himself of the only clear insight into the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, which has yet been revealed to man? If I may pursue the same train of reasoning a little further, what a change may be wrought in public opinion, even in the same Christian country, in the course of time?

We need not look to nations characterized as savage, for examples of preposterous errors in judgment as well as practice. Within the space of three centuries, enlightened England, having all the advantages of the outward letter of the revealed law, has seen great part of the nation vindicating the propriety of burning and enslaving the bodies of men for reasons they would now be ashamed to own. En-

lightened men have even sentenced to death unhappy women for the supposed crime of witchcraft—a charge at which the most ignorant of the vulgar is now disposed to smile. Are these variations in human opinion in one country less inconsistent with right reason and moral feeling than the acts of the nations above specified with the standard of immutable Truth? Had men no moral principle or conscience in England because they imbibed these irrational notions? Has the Carib no sense of right and wrong—no moral perception—or is it seared and blunted to every other moral sentiment, because he eats the flesh of his enemy,—or the Esquimaux, because he leaves his aged relative to perish,—or the Chinese, because he exposes the new-born infant to destruction; or the Hindoo, because the deluded pilgrim devotes himself to death beneath the wheels of Juggernaut, and the widow, a voluntary sacrifice to the flames on the funeral pile of her deceased husband?

Obscurity in some things, or in part, does not necessarily darken the whole mind and withdraw it from the casual influences of the light of Truth. If that were the case, few could rank among the truly enlightened: for the majority have their prejudices, their errors, and imperfect views. But notwithstanding all these things, some instinctive irradiations do now and then break forth in the moral gloom of the most barbarous climes; and sparks of superior light may occasionally be discovered, kindling, as it were, in the bosom of savage nature.

The light or talents, or opportunities and advantages, with which different persons are favoured, vary exceedingly; and we are not answerable to one another for the fruits or consequences, *except we transgress the moral law to each other's injury.* We believe that we are only accountable for what we have received to profit with; we are however accountable for the advantages we have thrown away. Hence the Pagan or Mahometan, who, with the exception above noticed, acts according to the measure of his knowledge and fulfils the dictates of his Conscience, merits no condemnation *from us.* Nay, he may be accepted at the throne of Grace in preference to him to whom much has been given, and whose return to the bountiful Parent has been small. While then we make Conscience variable according to the light and knowledge with which any may have been favoured, let us not suppose that the ultimate standard of Truth itself is variable. He that now accepts the contrition of the broken heart as a sweet-smelling sacrifice, accepted also the outward offerings of the Law: and will he not accept the simple devotion of his sincere-hearted children, whether accompanied with ceremonies or not, among the unenlightened heathen?

The ultimate standard of Truth is a recondite treasure of which few know the value; and fewer still seek it where it is to be found—*in their own hearts.* What then, it may be asked, are the Scriptures of Truth to be superseded? By no means; they are of inestimable value: they point to the true teacher;

they shew us to what a measure of holiness some of our fellow creatures have attained; they show us the life and doctrine of the divine pattern of Christian purity: they are profitable to salvation through the influence of God's spirit: but this spirit they cannot give. What man, then, would not avail himself of every outward means to direct and instruct him in the concerns of highest interest;—the will of his Maker—the dispensations of Providence to the righteous and the wicked—the clear knowledge of his real state—the plan of salvation—the necessity and duty of obedience, patience, humility, purity of life and resignation—and the undoubted hopes of immortality? These were given to man by an extraordinary revelation; and it would be presumptuous to reject them.

But the knowledge of good and evil, in whatever way communicated to man, has been derived from the same eternal fountain of Purity and Wisdom. The channels have been different; but the source has been essentially the same. Whether instinctively revealed by Conscience, or excogitated by Reason, or promulgated on tables of stone, or displayed by the Gospel, this knowledge has been a revelation from God himself; varying only in the means and the degrees of accompanying light. For it has pleased divine goodness to measure out this light and knowledge from age to age, by effusions increasing both in brightness and fulness—each more perfect than the last, but agreeing fundamentally in the

principles—from the simplest moral intelligence to the last glorious dispensation by Jesus Christ.

So that it may be said, instinctive or natural moral emotions have handed this knowledge imperfectly to Reason, by the Light of Nature; Reason has acknowledged their fitness and congruity to the nature of man, and has *secondarily* proved the advantage of virtue and the disadvantage of vice; but *primarily* was never able to touch the heart from which both sprung, and to awake it into *feeling*: for Reason would be as competent to digest the laws of optics *without* an organ of vision, as to form the moral code without an implanted sense or principle of moral emotion. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the moral law was delivered more clearly and manifestly, with extraordinary signs of confirmation: and at last the light of the Gospel demonstrated, by unquestionable evidence, the true relation between man and his Maker, his immense distance in a natural state from the source of divine purity, his weakness and moral wants, and the only sure and effectual remedy.

Is it then of no consequence that man should be directed not only *where* to find his true guide and teacher, but *how* to approach him?

It does not appear that he knows this from instinctive feeling; he cannot know it from unassisted Reason; but he sees the *object* and the *path* in Scripture. He sees what others have *done* and *felt* and *known*,—their *experience* in holiness,—the *true temper* of their minds,—the *nature* of their spiritual *support*, and the *means* of attaining it.

Sect. IV.

Illustrations of the foregoing Reasonings.

The following quotations are designed to illustrate some or other of the preceding remarks.

"Conscience," says Dr. Beattie, "like every other human faculty, and suitably to the whole analogy of animal and even of vegetable nature, arrives at maturity by degrees, and may either be improved by cultivation, or perverted by mismanagement.

"In our early years it is improved by moral precept and good example; and as we advance in life by habits of consideration, and a strict adherence to truth and our duty. By different treatment, by want of instruction, bad example, inconsiderate behaviour, neglect of duty, and disregard to truth, it may be perverted and almost destroyed. From this, however, we are not warranted to infer as some have done, that it is not a *natural* faculty, but an *artificial* way of thinking superinduced by education; nor suppose that opposite habits and opposite modes of teaching would have made us disapprove virtue and approve vice with the same energy of thought, wherewith we now disapprove vice and approve virtue.—For let it be observed that even our outward senses may be made better or worse by good or bad

management.—Even Reason itself is subject to the same law of habit, as the means of improvement or debasement—Yet it will not be said Reason is merely an artificial thing, a way of thinking superinduced by education."

Dr. Rush has the following remarks: "The low degrees of moral perception, that have been discovered in certain African and Russian tribes of men, no more invalidate our proposition of the universal and essential existence of a moral faculty in the human mind, than the low state of their intellects prove that Reason is not natural to man."—"It is with virtue as with fire. It exists in the mind, as fire does in certain bodies, in a latent or quiescent state. As collision renders the one sensible, so education renders the other visible.—There are appetites that are wholly artificial. There are tastes so entirely vitiated as to perceive beauty in deformity. Why under certain unfavourable circumstances may there not exist also a moral faculty, in a state of sleep, or subject to mistakes?—It would be as absurd to maintain, because olives become agreeable to many people from habit, that we have no natural appetites for any other kind of food, as to assert that any part of the human species exist without a moral principle, because in some of them it has wanted causes to excite it into action, or has been perverted by example."

Dr. Price, in his excellent work on Morals, enforces similar ideas:—

"In innumerable instances," says he, "the practical errors of men have arisen from their speculative errors: from their mistaking facts, or not seeing the whole of a case: whence it cannot but often happen that they will think those things right which if they had juster opinions of facts and cases they would unavoidably condemn."—"It is just as reasonable to expect disagreement and errors here, as in the application of the received principles of knowledge and assent in general. Nor would it be more extravagant to conclude, that men have not speculative reason, because of the diversity in their speculative opinions, than it is to conclude, they have no powers of moral perception, or that there is no fixed standard of morality, and no certain principles and rules for judging of it, because of the diversity in men's opinions, concerning the fitness or unfitness, lawfulness or unlawfulness of particular practices."—"It is not easy to determine how far our natural sentiments may be altered by custom, education and example.—Notions, the most stupid, may through their influence, come to be rooted in the mind beyond the possibility of being ever eradicated, antipathies given to objects naturally the most agreeable, and sensation itself perverted. It would be unreasonable to conclude from hence that all we are and think is derived from education.—Education and habit can give us no new ideas.—The power and influence they have suppose somewhat natural as their foundation. Were it not for the natural powers by which we perceive

pleasure and pain, good and evil, beauty and deformity, the ideas of them could never be excited in us, any more than the ideas of colour in persons born blind." "The sensible horror at vice, and affectionate attachment to virtue, may be impaired, the conscience seared, the nature of particular practices mistaken, the sense of shame weakened, the judgment darkened, the voice of reason stifled, and self-deception practiced, to the most lamentable and fatal degree. Yet the grand lines and primary principles of morality *are so deeply wrought into our hearts and one with our minds*, that they will be for ever legible. The general approbation of certain virtues, and dislike of their contraries, must always remain, and cannot be erased but with the destruction of all reason and intellectual perception. The most depraved never sink so low, as to lose all moral discernment, all ideas of right and wrong, justice and injustice, honour and dishonour. This appears from the judgments they pass on the actions of others, and the resentment they discover, when they are themselves the objects of ill treatment. Whatever peace they enjoy proceeds in a great measure from a studied neglect of reflexion, *and from their having learnt to disguise their vices under the appearance of some virtuous or innocent qualities.*"*

It is observed by Dr. Hutcheson, that "it is strange, *Reason* is universally allowed to men, notwithstanding all the stupid ridiculous opinions received, in

* Review of the principal questions in morals. chap. 7.

many places; and yet absurd practices, founded on those very *opinions*, shall seem an argument against any *moral sense*, although the bad conduct is not owing to any irregularity in the *moral sense*, but to a wrong *judgment* or *opinion*."—"Our *sense of virtue* generally leads us exactly enough according to our opinions; and *therefore the absurd practices which prevail in the world, are much better arguments that men have no reason, than that they have no moral sense of beauty in actions*."

Thus, putting the aged, the deformed and weak, and children, to death, are vindicated by divers plausible reasons, arising from unsound opinions, as well as the worship of idolatrous nations—and thus we find that the basest actions are dressed in some tolerable mask. What others call Avarice, appears to the agent a *prudent care of a family* or *friends*; fraud, *artful conduct*; Malice and Revenge, *a just sense of honour, and a vindication* of our right in possessions or fame. Fire and sword and desolation among enemies *a just thorough defence of our country*; persecution, *a zeal for the Truth*, and for the eternal happiness of men, which heretics oppose. In all these *instances* men generally act from a *Sense of virtue* upon *false opinions*."*

Dr. Thomas Brown, in speaking of the limitations to which a moral principle is liable, makes some judicious remarks. His reasonings come very near to those of Dr. Price, and amount to this;—that

* Inquiry concerning moral Good and Evil, sect. 4.

though all the particulars of duty and rectitude were in themselves plain and easy to be determined; the influence of other causes might have been expected *a priori* to have this modifying effect upon a moral principle, if, without considering any of the objections urged, we had only reflected on the analogous phenomena of other principles of the mind, that are allowed to be essential to it, and that are yet capable of similar modifications.

"The first limitation," he observes, "relates to the influence of extreme passion, which incapacitates the mind for perceiving moral distinctions, as it does for perceiving distinctions of every sort—virtue, though lost to our perceptions for a moment, however, is immediately perceived again, with distinct vision as before, as soon as the agitation subsides:—it is like the image of the sky in the bosom of a lake, which vanishes indeed, while the waters are ruffled, but which reappears more and more distinctly as every little wave sinks gradually to rest,—till the returning calm shows again in all its purity the image of that Heaven which has never ceased to shine on it." "Moral Truths are to the impassioned mind as little universal as the truths in geometry."

Another limitation relates to the influence of habit and association. "It is pleasing," he says, "to love those who are around us; above all, those domestic relations to whom we owe our being, or to whose society we owed the happiness of many years of which we have forgotten every thing, but that they

were delightful. It is not merely pleasing to love these first friends; we feel that it is a duty to love them; that, unless in circumstances of extraordinary profligacy on their part, if we were not to love them, we should look upon ourselves with moral disapprobation. The feeling of this very duty mingles in our estimates of the conduct of those whom we love; and it is in this way that Association in such cases operates;—not by rendering vice in itself less an object of disapprobation, than before, but by blending with our disapprobation of the action that love of the Agent, which is, as it were an opposite duty. It is the *good* that is mixed with the bad, that we *love, not the bad*, which is mixed with the good."*

Hooker observes, "We see a general agreement in the secret opinion of men, that every man ought to embrace the Religion which is true, and to shun, as hurtful, whatsoever dissenteth from it, but *that* most, which doth farthest dissent. The Generalitie of which persuasion argueth, that God hath imprinted it by nature.—The errors of the most seduced this way have been mixed with some truths."

"And whereas (speaking of the Romans) we read so many of them so much commended, some for their mild and merciful disposition, some for their virtuous severitie, some for their integritie of life, *all these were the fruits of true and infallible principles delivered unto us in the word of God, as the axiomes of our Religion, which being imprinted by the God of nature*

* Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind.

in their hearts also, and taking better root in some than in most others, grew, though not *from*, yet *with and amidst* the heaps of manifold repugnant errors; which errors of corrupt religion had also their suitable effects in the lives of the self-same parties."

"Seeing that mens' desire is in general to hold no religion but the true; and that whatsoever good effects doe grow out of their religion who embrace, instead of the true, a false, *the roots thereof are certain sparkes of the light of truth intermingled with the darknesse of error*; because no religion can wholly and only consist of *untruths*; we have reason to think that all true virtues are to honour Religion as their parent, and all well ordered common-weales to love her as their chiefest stay."*

"If conscience," says Rousseau, "speaks to every heart, why then are there so few that listen to it. Ah! it is because it speaks to us the language of nature, which every thing causes us to forget. Conscience is timid, it loves retirement and peace; it is alarmed by the noise of the world; *the prejudices from which they represent it to take its origin, are its most cruel enemies*; it flies away or is silent before them; their noise drowns its gentle voice, and hinders it from being heard; fanaticism dares to counterfeit it, and to meditate crimes in its name. It leaves us at last in consequence of being neglected; it no longer speaks to us, no longer answers; and, after such continued contempt for it, it costs as much to

* See Ecclesiastical Politic. Book Fifth.

recal it, as it did to banish it. Let but the form and the love of virtue be imprinted by nature in the bottom of my soul, I shall have my rule as long as it is not disfigured: but how am I to assure myself that I shall always preserve in its purity this internal image which has no model among sensible beings to which it can be compared? Do we not know that inordinate affections corrupt the judgment as well as the will, and that Conscience is changed and modified insensibly in every age, in every people, and in every individual, according to the inconstancy and the variety of prejudices?—Let us adore the eternal Being;—with a breath of air we destroy these phantoms of Reason, which have only a visionary existence, and flee away like a shadow before immutable Truth."*

I should think myself called upon to apologize for the length of the following quotation from Dr. Reid, if it were not so very applicable to the view I have taken.

"Our moral Judgment, or Conscience, grows to maturity from an imperceptible *seed*, planted by our Creator. It may be much aided in its strength and vigour by proper culture.

"The faculties which we have in common with the brutes appear first, and have the quickest growth. In the first period of life, children are not capable of distinguishing right from wrong in conduct; neither are they capable of abstract reasoning in matters of science. Their judgment of moral conduct, as well as

* Pensées de Rousseau.

their judgment of truth, advances by insensible degrees, like the corn and grass.

" In vegetables first the blade or the leaf appears, then the flower, and last of all the fruit, the noblest production of the three, and that for which the others were produced. According to the variation of soil, season, and culture, some plants are brought to much greater perfection than others of the same species. But no variation of culture, or season, or soil, can make grapes grow from thorns, or figs from thistles.

" We may observe a similar progress in the faculties of the mind; for there is a wonderful analogy among all the works of God, from the least even to the greatest.

" The faculties of man unfold themselves in a certain order appointed by the great Creator. In their gradual progress they may be greatly assisted or retarded, improved or corrupted, by education, instruction, example, exercise, and by the society and conversation of men, which like soil and culture in plants, may produce great changes to the better or to the worse.

" The *seeds* of moral discernment are at first tender and delicate, and easily warped.

" Our intellectual discernment is not so strong and vigorous by nature as to secure us from errors in speculation. It would be absurd, from the errors and ignorance of mankind, to conclude, that man has not a natural faculty of discerning truth, and distinguishing it from error.

"In like manner, our moral discernment of what we ought and what we ought not to do, is not so strong and vigorous by nature, as to secure us from very gross mistakes with regard to our duty.

In matters of conduct we are liable to be misled by prejudices of education, or by wrong instruction; and to have our judgment warped by our appetites and passions, by fashion, and by the contagion of evil example.

"The natural power of discerning between right and wrong needs the aid of instruction, education, exercise, and habit, as well as our other natural powers.

"There is a strong analogy between the progress of the body from infancy to maturity, and the progress of all the powers of the mind. This progression in both is the work of nature, and in both may be greatly aided by proper education.

"The power of vegetation in the seed of a plant, without heat and moisture, would for ever lie dormant. The rational and moral powers of man would perhaps lie dormant without instruction and example. Yet these powers are a part, and perhaps the noblest part of his constitution; as the power of vegetation is of the seed.

"Our first moral conceptions are probably got by attending coolly to the conduct of others, and observing what moves our approbation, what our indignation. These sentiments spring from our moral faculty as naturally as the sensations of sweet and

bitter from the faculty of taste. They have their natural objects. But most human actions are of a mixed nature, and have various colours, according as they are viewed, on different sides. Prejudice against, or in favour of the person, is apt to warp our opinion. It requires attention and candour to distinguish the good from the ill, and, without favour or prejudice, to form a clear and impartial judgment. In this, we may be greatly aided by instruction.

"The bulk of mankind have but little of this culture in the proper season; and what they have is often unskilfully applied; by which means bad habits gather strength, and false notions of pleasure, of honour, and of interest occupy the mind. They give little attention to what is right and honest. Conscience is seldom consulted, and so little exercised, that its decisions are weak and wavering.

"He must be very ignorant of human nature, who does not perceive that the *seed of virtue* in the mind of man, like that of a tender plant in an unkindly soil, requires care and culture in the first period of life, as well as our own exertion when we come to maturity.

"The path of duty is a plain path, which the upright in heart can rarely mistake. Such it must be, since every man is bound to walk in it. There are some intricate cases in morals which admit of disputation, but these seldom occur in practice; and when they do, the learned disputant has no great advantage: For the unlearned man, who uses the best means in

his power to know his duty, and acts according to his knowledge, is inculpable in the sight of God and man. He may err, but is not guilty of immorality."*

Sect. V.

Of the various opinions concerning the nature of the Moral Principle.

We see, therefore, that, notwithstanding all the seeming exceptions which have been made to the doctrine of an internal teacher—exceptions which may be sufficiently accounted for, by the passions, conflicting interests, and free will of man; most of the writers above quoted, admit what is called a Moral Sense, or innate principle of moral obligation. It is curious however to note the variety of opinions which have been entertained respecting the nature of this principle. Human wisdom, it would appear, is scarcely competent to develope the true relations of a secret Guide and Intelligence, to which such an important office in the moral economy of man is intrusted by the Author of his being. Accordingly, those who have admitted the principle, have differed as to its nature; and those, who have rejected it, seem to have been scarcely aware of what their rejection of it involved.

* Reid's Essays.

Some men, classed among Freethinkers, have adopted an opinion quite opposite to that held by those who call themselves Orthodox; and on this occasion, singularly enough, these opponents seem to have changed sides: the first, without intending it, maintaining the fundamental principle of the gospel; and the last laying claim to orthodoxy, and yet striking at the very root of Christianity. The first have maintained that there is an implanted sense, or power in the mind, which if obeyed in all its secret monitions, will lead man safely in his duty: the last have denied such a dogma, and have had recourse to the outward revelation of Holy Scripture to make up what they consider a palpable deficiency in man's moral economy.

The opinion of the first, therefore, though it were just in itself, might be liable to some doubt or suspicion, merely because it was embraced by authors of that description. For, when the current of infidelity was running strong, and natural religion was making way, in contradistinction to revealed, it was objected by the supposed orthodox, that the notion of a moral sense or moral law-giver being implanted in the mind, to dictate the path of duty, was invented for the purpose of exalting the dignity of human nature, and lessening the value and importance of Christianity.

Without question, there was some ground for this imputation; and there is good reason to believe, that the class of Freethinkers did, with a sinister motive, make use of such an argument: for, the more perfect

they made human nature to be in itself with its own natural powers, the less need there was for the supposed adventitious aid of Christianity, or for any other special dispensation from above, to teach the lessons of morality and religion. In so far therefore as this power was held to be a natural faculty, belonging intrinsically to the constitution of the mind, like the memory or fancy, there was an obvious leaning to natural Religion, in contradistinction to Revealed. And this opinion was accordingly rejected entirely by their opponents; who, in their rejection of the principle, though they might perhaps have justly found fault with the terms, appear not to have considered that they were undermining the foundation of Christianity itself.

Because, the internal light of a moral principle, the still small voice of Conscience, the candle of the Lord in the soul of man, the unerring and infallible witness for Truth, may be different appellations, or other names, for the divine light of Christianity itself; which in the language of Scripture is emphatically stated to have "appeared to all men;"—and "to lighten every man that cometh into the world." It is moreover stated, that "a manifestation of it is given to every one to profit withal."

Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, and others, seem to have been advocates for the sufficiency and natural jurisdiction of a Moral Sense. Locke, Berkley, Paley, and their followers, appear to have been among the

supporters of that opinion which makes Reason the umpire and judge, Education or human instruction the medium, and Scripture the only revelation now vouchsafed to man, therefore the only adequate rule of faith and manners. The latter however do not deny the casual operation and influence of a Holy Spirit.

But a third class have ranked themselves among the advocates of a moral faculty, acknowledging the use of Reason, but not its entire sufficiency, therefore without committing themselves on the side of Deism like the first, and yet without clearly explaining the relation of a moral sense to the Gospel principle of Light and Truth, as Reid, Hutcheson, Stewart, Beattie, and Smith. Of all these writers Dr. Reid appears to have taken that view of the subject which agrees best with Scripture; his description of a moral principle with the accompanying illustrations and analogies applying very closely to the Scripture model.

"It might not be a difficult task to show what errors are likely to arise from that opinion, which, admitting a revelation, confines it to the written record, thereby limiting its effects to certain minds; as well as from that, which, extending it beyond the written record, would interpose so many bars and difficulties in the way of its reception, by imagining a host of dangers from mistaken zeal, and insisting upon the controul of an outward faculty like Reason, as would virtually

tend to exclude this divine influence, or negative its operation, or at least to make it extremely rare and partial.

On the other hand, when we consider that those who admit a Moral Principle, are so divided among themselves respecting its nature, that they can affirm nothing certain upon the matter; we are naturally led to wonder that they do not at once apply themselves to Scripture for the only clear and lucid explanation of the difficulty which can be given.

This Moral Sense or Faculty, Moral Principle, Internal Teacher, Light of Nature, Divine Reason—under whatever name it may pass—represents the self-same Spiritual Power, operating variously, according as it has to act in greater or less measure, according to the diversity of talents intrusted to man—"for there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit"—according as it has to act in the natural and uncivilized state; or in those who, possessing the outward knowledge, are without the inward virtue; or, possessing the inward virtue with prompt obedience and simplicity of heart, yet have nothing of human learning, or at least a mere sketch of religious principle unfolded to them by outward instruction. It cannot be supposed that, because different effects are exhibited in these different states of the mind, in different persons, the power or influence should itself be different; and at one time deserve no better name

than a Moral Sense, and at another be dignified with that of a Holy Spirit. At the same time, its mode of action is, and ever will be, a mystery. For "as the wind blows where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit:"—so little does any man know of its power and influence upon the mind. It is distributed in different measures. Therefore it is not one thing in the Jew and another in the Greek. In Scythian and Barbarian, Christian and Heathen, bond and free, it is the same; varying only in degree of intensity and manifestation; like the light of the great luminary of the world from the faintest ray to the brightest beam. Even those who have been enlightened may become dark. "Take heed that the light in thee be not darkness."

I have stated that philosophers differ in their speculative notions respecting the nature of this moral principle. With regard also to Virtue, that perfection of human conduct in thought, word, and deed, for which we may suppose the principle in question was implanted, there is a like diversity of opinion, perhaps consisting more in name than in reality.

Dr. Adam Smith observes, that "it is the opinion of some, that Virtue is recommended to us by the principle of *Self-Love*, as the former tends to promote our private interest: others think that *Reason* points out the difference between one character and another in the same way that it does that between truth and

falsehood; and, others think that the virtuous character is recommended by a *peculiar faculty* of *perception* called a *Moral Sense*; which is gratified or pleased, as the contrary disgusts and displeases it."

Dr. Clarke makes Virtue to consist in acting according to the *fitness of things*; Shaftesbury, in maintaining a proper *balance* of the affections and due regulation of the passions. Cudworth and Hutcheson place Virtue in *Benevolence*. Hume places it in *Utility*; and Paley, in *Expediency*.

In this way, finding that they could not account for the origin or primary source of moral sentiments, by the operation of a discursive Faculty or Reason, philosophers have had recourse to various theories to explain it; some referring it to one principle and some to another. Shaftesbury and Hume refer it to Taste; Dr. Hutcheson and others to a Moral Sense; Dr. Adam Smith, to Sympathy; Dr. Richard Price, following Cudworth, conceived that moral distinctions were perceived by the *Understanding*, and to it ascribed the origin of the ideas of right and wrong, but not by any discursive process; taking the *Understanding* in a more comprehensive signification than is usually attached to the word.

Dugald Stewart remarks, that "if the distinction between the moral faculty and our other active powers be acknowledged, it is of the less consequence what particular theory we adopt concerning the origin of our moral ideas; and, accordingly, Mr. Smith, though he resolves moral approbation ultimately into

a feeling of the mind, represents the Supremacy of Conscience as a principle, which is equally essential to all the different systems, that have been proposed on the subject. Upon whatever we suppose our moral faculties to be founded, whether upon a certain modification of Reason, upon an original instinct, called a Moral Sense, *or upon some other principle of our nature*, it cannot be doubted that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the Supreme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses, passions, and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained.—It is the peculiar office of these faculties to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature."*

Upon the preceding passage I shall only remark, that, although it may be of little consequence what theory may be adopted concerning the origin of our moral ideas, it must be of great importance to a Christian to know *how* and *where*, in other words, to what principle, and by what mental exercises, he is to look for the due regulation of his conduct in the sight of God and his fellow-creature; and whether he has an infallible guide and teacher in his own breast, or is left to wander, as it were, at large in outward speculation, for a knowledge of his duty.

* See Outlines of Moral Philosophy, Sect. 6.

The general inference, from all these different opinions, is, that no speculative theory of moral sentiments, excogitated by human ingenuity, has hitherto explained, or is ever likely to explain, the difficulties of the subject: and that no true explanation can be given but by the light which is afforded in Scripture.

I shall therefore proceed to illustrate the foregoing views in the best manner I am able by this supreme authority.

CHAP. IX.

OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT IN THE SOUL.

SECT. I.

Introductory Remarks.

WE have seen in the foregoing review of opinions on the origin of what is called moral sentiment, in other words, the living operation of divine Truth in the soul, that human testimony, unaided by revelation, is much divided, and leaves us comparatively in darkness; some referring it to one source and some to another. For, Reason, natural Conscience, Benevolence, Sympathy, and Taste, have all had their respective advocates; and it cannot be said that satisfactory ground is afforded for acquiescence in any of the different systems.

After this statement of opinions and allusion to the doubts and intricate questions which the subject, as one of speculation, involves, it is natural that we should enjoy a degree of liberty and satisfaction in contemplating the brighter prospect presented to us in

the light of Scripture; like that which a man may be supposed to feel who has been wandering in a wilderness or dark thicket, embarrassed and uncertain at every turn, when he comes forth to breathe free air and to see the beauties of an open country and a straight path before him. Such is the prospect unfolded in Scripture, compared with the views developed by human speculation, in all things relating to the eternal interests of man. And thus we feel, in looking at this subject, when it is freed from metaphysical subtlety and jargon, and placed before us in its own beautiful simplicity, as it is illustrated and set forth in those incomparable Writings.

Having thus explained myself, I do not propose to speak of the beginning, developement, and operation of the divine spirit in the soul, as if it were a subject discoverable by human research; but to treat of it, in so far only, as it is plainly unfolded in Scripture. And I am willing to think that the conclusions will be found in great measure to accord with the preceding principles, as they are laid down in this Essay. Under these impressions it is that I submit the following truths or propositions for consideration.

First.—A measure of the Divine Spirit is intrusted to every man, and is represented as a seed sown in the heart, humble in its manifestations, and though small and easily overlooked, capable of increase by cultivation.

Second.—Though by outward research, or intellectual labour, the rational faculty may in some

respects be accessory to the growth and developement of this seed; yet it is only an incidental help, and not the necessary mean or instrument of its cultivation: for this consists *immediately*, in obedience to the light or knowledge received; in prostration of the soul before its Maker; in humble aspirations to the Father of Mercies for help, direction, and preservation; in charity to all men; in a life of purity and self-denial; and in true hunger and thirst after righteousness, and further discoveries of the Divine will.

Third.—The influence and operation of this Divine spirit are not always accessible, and waiting upon the creature's pleasure; but only accessible through patience, watching, and prayer: for this influence is frequently withdrawn from the righteous themselves, to prove their faith, allegiance, and necessary dependance upon God alone; and it is withdrawn also from the disobedient, even as an accuser, after they have repeatedly slighted its reproofs and rebelled against its laws.

Fourth.—As the rational faculties, or natural powers of the understanding, are always more or less at the command and under the controul of man, and the ratio of increase in the seed of Divine Grace, is not in proportion to the speculative knowledge of Divine Truth, but in proportion to heartfelt obedience and living operative Faith; it follows, demonstratively, that the discursive or argumentative faculty is not the source, discoverer, and framer, by any intellectual

process, synthetic or analytic, of Divine Truth in the soul.

Fifth.—This Divine Spirit is the spirit of Christ himself, in all ages the same; and its manifestations are true revelations from above, perceived not by Sense nor by Reason, but by the inward eye of Faith.

I shall proceed to consider these truths or propositions in order.

Sect. II.

Of the Seed of Divine Truth.

Proposition I.

A Measure of the Divine Spirit is intrusted to every man, and is represented as a seed sown in the heart, humble in its manifestations, and, though small and easily overlooked, capable of increase by cultivation.

We find in Scripture that different terms are used to denote the same principle, as, the "grace" and "gift of God"—"the manifestation of the Spirit"—"the light of Christ"—"the word of God"—"the Holy Spirit"—"the anointing or divine unction"—"the kingdom of God" in the heart: and it is compared, as, in the parables,—to a seed,—to a talent,—to a little leaven; each capable of making increase; as, by assimilating to its own nature, like the *leaven*,—

by gaining an addition, according to the use, like the *talent*,—or by multiplying in a good and fruitful soil, like the *seed.*

The parabolical illustration appears to be varied in order to give a clearer idea of a principle which either in its mode of existence or operation, could scarcely be conceived in any other way than by some outward analogy. The immediate followers themselves, whose minds were then partially enlightened, could not *at first* apprehend the mysteries of Divine things spiritually. But under every different view the application is so pertinent as to leave no doubt that the same thing is indicated.

It must, however, be obvious that this principle—though of divine origin, and capable of unfolding divine counsel, according to the purity and sincerity of obedience—is not given to man as an irresistible, unvarying impulse, like the instinct of the lower animals, perfect, without any previous instruction, in its operations: nor, on the other hand, is it given as a dark and hidden law, only deducible by abstract reasoning, to a knowledge of which the learned only might claim the privilege of attaining. It therefore differs from instinct, in as much as it acts in a being who has power to shut out its influence or to admit it.

The universality of this Divine Gift is very clearly stated in different passages of Scripture, so as scarcely to admit of the least doubt; as in the following.

"This is the true light," says the Evangelist John, "that lighteth *every man* that cometh into the

world."* The apostle of the Gentiles declares also, that "A measure or manifestation of the Spirit is given *to every man* to profit withal."† And further, "The Grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared *unto all men.*"‡

The same dignified Apostle, speaking of men generally, says, "That which may be known of God is *manifest in them*; for God hath shewed it unto them."§

This principle, as before remarked, is represented under the similitude of a seed sown in the heart. "The kingdom of God is within you"—said Christ himself,—not to the Apostles, who, it might perhaps be contended, were already under Divine influence, and therefore made partakers of this seed,—but to the Pharisees who rejected him and were filled with malice against him:—"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. The kingdom of God is within you."‖

It is plain that it could not be in them as a living operative power, sanctifying the will and affections to the nature of the heavenly kingdom; but as an unquickened, unprofitable seed that took no root in their stony hearts;—as a light to which they would not give heed, and which their darkness and prejudices would not permit them to comprehend;—a free gift which they not only rejected inwardly but outwardly. But if the kingdom of Heaven was, in this sense, in

* John, ch. 1. † 1 Cor. 12, 7. ‡ Titus 2. 11.
§ Rom. 1. 19. ‖ Luke 17. 21.

the malignant Pharisees, it is to be inferred that the seed of the kingdom of Heaven is sown generally in man.—At another time, the Divine author of our religion said to his disciples, "The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed."* And this declaration is further illustrated by the parable of the sower in which he says, "The seed is the word of God;"†—the Word of God, and the kingdom of God, in this sense, being the same, when the principle or foundation in the soul, from which divine life and immortal felicity spring, is indicated. For this Word, we are told, was sown in different sorts of ground, as in the rocky, by the way side, among thorns, in good ground; comparable to the eager, the careless and superficial, the lukewarm, the worldly minded, the good and honest heart, bringing forth thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold.

The same analogy, differing only as the seed and plant differ from the root and branch, is maintained in that saying of our Lord and Master in which he was speaking of his relation to his disciples; "I am the vine: ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, *and I in him*, bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered."‡

Two of the immediate followers of Christ have also alluded to this Divine seed in the heart.

Thus Peter speaks of "Being born not of cor-

* Matthew 13. 31. † Luke 8. 11. ‡ John 15. 5.

ruptible *seed* but of incorruptible:"* and John also, "whoso is born of God does not commit sin; for *his seed* abideth in him."†

These passages seem all like rays of light, converging to a point, in support of the same doctrine; and require little if any comment.

We observe also, in reference to the Humility of its appearance, that this heavenly witness is not given to man as a matured Instinct, ripe with moral lessons, and embracing, as it were, a code of divine truths or propositions for mere speculative instruction; binding, by a sort of irresistible impulse; or imposing, by their universal clearness; or commanding assent, by their own intrinsic authority. But it is given simply as a seed, containing within itself the principles on which a life of immortal blessedness is founded, for amendment of the heart, and involving truly the hopes and interests of a heavenly kingdom; and it is left to man himself to cultivate or neglect it.—It is therefore *small* in its beginning; and He who knew how easily it might be overlooked, was pleased emphatically and figuratively to represent it as "*the least of all seeds.*"

Under other similitudes we find the same allusion to be conveyed; as the *dawning* of the light of truth upon the heart shining more and more to the perfect day,‡—*the still small voice*§ speaking as never man spake,—the *babes* in Christ,‖ and little children of whom the kingdom of Heaven was to consist. All

* Peter 1. 2. 3. † John 1. 3. 7. ‡ 2 Peter 1. 19.
§ 1 Kings 19. 12. ‖ 1 Cor. 3. 1.

Scripture testimony bears upon this low and meek and docile state, as the first essential, in the school of Christ, to the growth and cultivation of this seed. A striking illustration is afforded in the remarks on little children. "Suffer little children," said Christ, "to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."* And "whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, *as a little child*, shall not enter therein."† We are also to notice that it was immediately after the Disciples had been disputing which among them should be the greatest, that he took a child and set him in the midst of them, saying, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven."‡

Upon another occasion Jesus uttered this language, "I thank thee, O father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto *babes*."§

The Apostle Peter counsels the early converts "as *new born babes* to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby."‖ And Paul addresses the Corinthians as a Christian society, among whom there were many as yet inexperienced, and *babes in Christ*, whom he had fed with milk and not with meat; for they *were not yet able to bear it*.¶

* Mat. 19. 14. † Mark 10. 15. ‡ Mat. 18. 3, 4.
§ Mat. 11. 25. ‖ 1 Peter 2. 1. ¶ 1 Cor. 3. 2.

From all these testimonies, we may perceive, that there was an advancement, from small beginnings, in the Christian life—a growing in grace, from stature to stature; and that divine knowledge was unfolded, by degrees, as the spiritual senses were opened to receive it.—For that otherwise it could make no vital impression,—and, by no other powers, could it be clearly apprehended. But in proportion as this seed was cultivated, and this light, however small, was obeyed, religious advancement proceeded; and a reward was experienced, answerable to that announced to the good and faithful servant, who had occupied diligently with his lord's intrusted talents: "Well done,—thou hast been faithful in a *few* things, I will make thee ruler over *more*."*

The view now taken, and I think fairly deduced from Scripture, is not new.

In the few lines before quoted from Milton, in allusion to the law of Conscience, he says, "Light *after* light, *well used*, they shall attain."

Law, in his reply to Dr. Trapp, after speaking of the "Fulness of the spirit in Christ," adds, "But in us only a *spark* or *seed* of the *word* is formed and raised up into a new heavenly man."

The following illustration from a modern writer is applicable to the purpose. "In the same manner, as the Divine Being has scattered the seeds of plants and vegetables in the body of the earth, so he has implanted a portion of his own incorruptible seed, or of

* Luke 19. 17. and 16. 10.

that which in Scripture language is called the "seed of the kingdom" in the soul of every individual of the human race. As the Sun by its genial influence quickens the vegetable seed, so it is the office of the Holy Spirit, in whom is life, and who resides in the temple of man, to quicken that which is heavenly. And in the same manner as the vegetable seed conceives, and brings forth a plant or a tree, with root, stem, and branches; so if the soul in which the seed of the kingdom is placed, be willing to receive the influence of the Holy Spirit upon it, this seed is quickened, and a spiritual offspring is produced. Now this offspring is as real a birth from the seed in the soul by means of the Spirit, as the plant from its own seed by means of the influence of the Sun."*

"It is a point fit and necessary"—says Lord Bacon, on the Interpretation of Nature,—"in the front and beginning of this work, without hesitation or reservation to be professed, that it is no less true in this human kingdom of knowledge, than in God's Kingdom of Heaven, that no man shall enter it, *except he become first as a little child.*"

* See Clarkson's Portraiture, vol. 2. chap. 7. sect. 4.

Sect. III.

Of its Cultivation.

Proposition II.

Though by outward research or intellectual labour the rational faculty may in some respects be accessory to the growth and developement of this seed; yet it is only an incidental help, and not the necessary mean or instrument of its cultivation: For this consists immediately in obedience to the light or knowledge received; in prostration of the soul before its Maker; in humble aspirations to the Father of Mercies for help, direction, and preservation; in charity to all men; in a life of purity and self-denial, and in true hunger and thirst after righteousness and further discoveries of the Divine will.

It appears to be consistent with fact that a degree of mental expansion and of outward cultivation is necessary for the developement of this seed, by way of preparation for its complete growth; otherwise we should see it attain to perfection in the infant and the uncivilized state of man. But it is certain on the other hand, that the rational intellect may be enlarged to a great extent without any evidence of advancement in the growth of this seed. The growth of the body by outward food, in the wise economy of things, is also a necessary preparation for the growth of the

understanding. Yet the body may grow, and the mind remain an uncultivated wilderness. Hence we may infer, in as much as distinct fruits are to be recognised, that the phenomena of natural, intellectual, and spiritual growth, proceed from distinct principles, which ought not to be confounded.

Some, however, speak of man as if he were born to be entirely governed by the laws of Sense and feeling, in following the bent of his animal nature; others, as if Reason were the only distinguishing mark between him and the brute, and competent to guide him to supreme happiness; while others argue as if Sense and Reason were both to be absorbed or annihilated in the enlargement of the Spiritual faculties. But extremes of opinion like these are not the growth of temperate minds; neither are they favourable to Truth. In the present state of things, we may legitimately exercise our animal and rational, as well as our spiritual natures. For, although the offices are distinct and ought not to interfere, yet no man can pretend to emancipate himself entirely from the power of the inferior faculties: this will continue till Death dissolves the connexion. It is still, however, possible that Sense and Reason may be so ordered, what, if I say sanctified, as to perform their respective offices in the true spiritual Christian, without condemnation, nay with profit. But, on the other hand, no consecration of Sense and Reason, combined or separate, can, or ought to, supersede the use and exercise of the spiritual faculties.

The Senses are improved by active use of the several outward organs: Reason is improved by combining the observations made by the Senses, by comparing the phenomena, by tracing effects from causes, by deducing inferences, and establishing laws either in reference to the natural world, or to the various moral incidents in the chequered scene of human life. But a third class of objects, requiring peculiar mental exercises, remote from those of speculative Reason, as well as from those of Sense, interests the spiritual faculties;—a class of objects,—if we may speak of the eternal Being and of the mysteries of his kingdom, as constituting a variety of objects—which are unseen; and for which the mind can find no evidence but in its own secret convictions; consequently belonging to another state of existence. And these are, no less than, the soul's affinity and immortality; its sense of good and evil, of moral responsibility, and of self-approbation and condemnation; its obedience to manifested duty; its purity and innocence, and the means by which they may be attained; its natural weakness and utter inability in its own strength and wisdom to attain to that state of perfection which it is enabled partially to comprehend, consequently its need of divine help; its continual obligations to Piety, and final acceptance with its Maker. Accordingly, the spiritual faculties are improved by devout and humble attention to the duties or exercises which immediately flow from a consideration of these objects.

Now we prove the proposition, by showing from Scripture, that the *exercises*, by which this seed is improved, are specifically different from the exercises by which the reasoning or speculative faculty is improved: and as the *means of cultivation* are different, so also the *fruits* of the Spirit are different from those of the natural understanding.

These exercises consist in obedience to the knowledge received, in cultivating a spirit of humility and meekness, in charity and a life of holiness, in hunger and thirst after righteousness, &c. And, it is to be observed, these are not passive virtues.

As to obedience, the Prophet forcibly testifies: "*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good*; and what doth the Lord *require* of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"*

As to the necessity of humility, it is declared by "the high and lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also* that is of a *contrite* and *humble* spirit."† And again; "God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the *humble*."‡ "The Lord forgetteth not the cry of the *humble*,"§ and "the *meek* will he guide in judgment." "He that *humbleth* himself shall be exalted."

As to Charity, it is said, "knowledge puffeth up, but charity *edifieth*."‖ "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."¶

* Micah 6. 8. † Isa. 57. 15. ‡ James 4. 6.
§ Ps. 9. 12. ‖ 1 Cor. 8. 1. ¶ Rom. 13. 10.

In respect to Holiness, the Apostle counsels, to "follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord."*

As, in the state of the body, hunger and thirst are designed to give notice of our natural wants; so hunger and thirst must be felt spiritually, in order that we may be sensible we have need, not only of spiritual support against our many infirmities, but of spiritual food to maintain the life of religion. He that is conscious of strength does not ask for assistance; he that is whole needs not a physician. But they who are sensible of their wants are induced to put up their secret prayers to the never-failing source of help; and thus a constant vital intercourse is kept up between the Father of all and his obedient children, similar to that which is maintained between the root of the vine and its branches, or between the life-giving energy of the Deity and the outward creation.

And therefore a blessing is pronounced upon them that *hunger and thirst* after righteousness, "for," it is said, "they shall be filled." "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost."†

It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the Apostle referred to the exercise of the *spiritual* and not of the *natural senses*, when he told the Hebrews: That when, for the time, they ought to have been teachers, they had need, on the contrary, again to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God; and

* Heb. 12. 14. † Rom. 14. 17.

were become such as had need of milk and not of strong meat. "For, every one," says he, "that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use, have their *Senses exercised* to discern both good and evil."‡

"The *fruit* of the Spirit," we are told," is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."§

Now, it is almost self-evident that the exercises and fruits, of which I have spoken, belonging as they do to the heart and not to the head, are not the offspring of the reasoning faculty; and it follows that the cultivation of this seed, from which all these exercises spring, is scarcely more to be looked for from the improvement of speculative reason, in as much as the objects are perfectly distinct, than from the exercise of the outward senses, or of fancy, or memory, or any other of the inferior faculties. At the same time, it must be allowed, that in dignity the rational approach nearest to the spiritual, and are better helps in regulating the moral conduct, and promoting the great ends of virtue.

Therefore, the acts and exercises, which of all others most dignify a human being, whose highest duties to a bountiful omniscient Creator, are love, dependence, obedience, and adoration, though consistent with the highest reason, are not in themselves, specifically, acts

‡ Heb. 5. 12. 14. § Gal. 5. 22. 23.

of reason: for example, submissive obedience, contrition, prostration of the soul, prayer, entire dependence, and resignation. These belong, as I have said, to the heart or will more than to the understanding. They do not depend upon the activity of a discursive faculty. They are acts at which Reason naturally revolts, because every one of them implies its insufficiency. On the other hand, Reason may confirm our internal sentiment, or may inform those who are in darkness, that such acts are expedient and necessary for our spiritual growth, just as it may inform the healthy that their daily food is necessary as well as those who are without a natural appetite; and that sleep and exercise contribute to the health of the body. But when the natural appetite is preserved, in a sound state of the body, these things are practised without reasoning. And, on the same ground, we may presume, that the offering of that heart must be cold, which is prompted by reason more than by affection. As there is a *natural* appetite, independent of Reason; so is there a *spiritual* hunger and thirst, which need not apply to Reason for food, either as to time or quantity.

Submissive obedience is what we require from the creatures below us, which we suppose to be destitute of *Reason*, and from our children before they attain to it. As an act of homage paid to the Supreme Governor of the universe, it is that entire conformity to the Divine will, which the whole creation is strictly bound to observe, and which no living creature, ca-

pable of knowing that there is a God, that is not in some degree estranged from Him in heart and affection, can resist.

Contrition or sorrow for transgression has no necessary connexion with a reasoning faculty. It does not spring from Reason: it is more allied to Love and Fear.

Prostration of the soul is the feeling of complete unworthiness experienced by a finite creature absorbed in suppliant adoration, and overwhelmed with the glories and perfections of a Being infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness. It is the act of a created intelligence, submitting all the strength of the understanding, the affections of the heart, and the treasures of acquired knowledge, to the great Giver of all, with a secret acknowledgment of their utter insignificance; and counting the highest human excellence, but as the flower of the field in the presence of his glorious Majesty.

Prayer and supplication, analogous to the cries and moving complaints of a tender infant soliciting maternal regard, and making known its wants, are the spiritual sighs and aspirations of the soul offered up in moments of weakness and affliction, when it is enabled to approach the throne of Mercy with the petition for a little strength and consolation from the Universal Parent.

Now it is obvious, that, the more a rational faculty is enlarged, and dependent upon its own resources, shifts, and calculations, which are all outward, the

less is it disposed by its own nature and constitution to seek for invisible help. Its wants must be supplied from the stores of its own sufficiency: and therefore it disdains to make application for assistance to any Power which it cannot command. This every day's experience shows us to be the case with the great masters of Human Reason. These, who would controul moral events by the wisdom of their own counsels and the strength of their own arm, would treat even Roman piety as superstition, if, in this Christian age, it were proposed to them for imitation. Yet, with all their arts and policy, how frequently abortive are their schemes! It is, indeed, true that worldly successes are often produced by worldly measures: "for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Wise, therefore, in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, they laugh at the simple-hearted who look up to heaven in their extremity. And, in the short reckoning of these, he that trusts in Providence is an enthusiast, *because* the ungodly are seen to flourish—perhaps only for a short season, in a few splendid undertakings, that entail no blessing!

Therefore, Dependence upon Providence and resignation to his will are from the same root of humility, the immediate growth of Religion, not of Reason. For the whole object of outward instruction, building as it does upon human experience, is to make men dependent upon their own sagacity in their intercourse with the world. And the natural effect is a steadiness

of purpose, in pursuing the schemes of life, rational they may be called, if judiciously planned, and perhaps not unlawful, yet, on the whole, tending to exalt the sufficiency of Reason. This is the natural effect, and we contend for nothing more. Reason, subjected to a higher principle, in all its movements, affords no ground for animadversion: governing a higher principle, it subverts the whole moral economy of man, proposes the lesser interests as of more importance than the greater, and, with seeming and specious consistency, introduces a real anarchy.

Constant dependence upon Providence, and humble reliance on divine help, accompanied with the diligent exercise and sanctified use of the natural faculties, bring the mind down from its lofty seat, as a self-sufficient agent, into a total surrender of its own might and power, and an acknowledgment of the dominion being vested in one Supreme God over all.

Thus we see that all the Christian virtues which really dignify the human mind in the sight of God, are virtues of Humility, and tend to reduce it in its own estimation, increasing in strength as the natural powers of intellect are brought into obedience: while those, which exalt it in the common estimation of the world, are virtues of an opposite character.

We have thus pointed out the means by which the mind is to grow in grace; in other words, by which its spiritual faculties become enlarged, and the spiritual senses are, as it were, quickened with a new life; and we perceive that they differ essentially from

the means by which the natural faculties are expanded. For, it is not by intense application of these, and by labour of intellect, as in the study of any science, nor by adding traditionally proposition to proposition, however excellent, in Divinity so called, that spiritual growth, from stature to stature, is attained. But it is by mental engagements of a totally different kind, by no means confined to a state of abstract and indolent meditation: as humility, patience, charity, innocency of life, purity of conduct, piety, resignation, prayer, and supplication.

These are the exercises—the wings of the soul on which it rises to the source of divine wisdom,—the state of spiritual hunger in which it is fitted to receive the supply of heavenly manna and of daily bread,—the pure unclouded *Eden* of the heart, in which the light of Truth finds a ready entrance, to illuminate with Divine counsel, and to warm with the influence of Divine Love.

Sect. IV.

This influence is not under human controul.

Proposition III.

The influence and operation of this Divine Spirit are not always accessible and waiting upon the creature's pleasure, but only accessible through patience, watching, and prayer. For this influence is frequently withdrawn from the righteous themselves, to prove their faith, allegiance, and necessary dependence upon God alone; and it is withdrawn also from the disobedient even as an accuser, after they have repeatedly slighted its reproofs and rebelled against its laws.

It is generally agreed that the Gift of the Spirit is a *free* gift—an act of grace—bestowed liberally upon all that ask it in a right disposition of mind. It is also universally diffused among men, though in many nations and in many minds, we have lamentable proof, that it is grievously oppressed. But, as the original seed was *freely* sown in the hearts of all men, so every accession to its power and influence, however small, is rightly termed a free gift, or renewed visitation,—in Scripture, a *renewing of the Holy Spirit*,—because it is dispensed in unconstrained bounty from God himself. Therefore, as it is a free gift, so its sensible influence, for many wise

purposes, may be occasionally withdrawn. And, accordingly, it appears to be consistent with the will of Providence, that no mortal should enjoy its uninterrupted effusion, so as not to stand in need of renewed supplies: whether it be that the present life is incompatible with such a moral paradise; or that the human soul, while clothed with mortality, is unable to bear such a continued display of divine favour, *lest it should be exalted above measure.* The petition for daily bread, which, applied to spiritual support, is *the renewing of the Holy Spirit,* is an exercise, with which no living mortal, however dignified before the Lord, can dispense. For, if it were otherwise, he would be independent of heavenly food—and this is not more possible than that he should be independent of outward food;—and he would be living as it were out of the Divine Harmony, which requires that God should be all in all—not only the Creator, but the Preserver, and Nourisher of his true Seed.

"No man," it is said, "hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit."* Though it is also declared that "he that asketh, receiveth." Therefore, the influence and operations of the spirit are not under the controul of man, but entirely subject to the will of God. And until it can be proved that the natural abilities can lawfully interfere in spiritual things, *so as to make true spiritual growth and increase,* it must remain an incontrovertible truth, that the Spirit of the Lord in the soul of man can alone direct the path of

* Eccles. 8. 8.

the just, and is his only sufficient guide and teacher in the way of Holiness.

David himself, dignified as he was, petitions the Almighty not to take his Holy Spirit from him. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and *renew* a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and *take* not thy holy spirit from me. *Restore* unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy *free spirit.*"*

If it be demonstrated from Scripture, that the only way in which the favour, notice, or counsel of the Supreme Being, in other words, the evidence of Divine Truth, can be obtained or communicated to his creature, is by a special act of Grace, freely given, or vouchsafed to the repeated petitions and applications of his children; it is clear that the effusions of his love and the influence of his spirit are not always accessible to man, and to be ensured by the exercises of the understanding in obedience to the activity of the will.

By what mysterious operation this Divine gift is communicated or withheld, we are ignorant; and have nothing to do with the metaphysical question whether it be a part of the mind itself as one of its attributes, or a casual unconnected visitant. It is sufficient that we know the fact, that the good are not always able to rejoice under its influence, and that the wicked do not always feel the stings of conscience, being hardened against its reproofs.

* Ps. 51. 10. 12.

The true adopted child of Grace, in other words, of the Heavenly Father's love and bounty, stands nearly in the same state of dependance, in which the outward creation is placed with regard to the immediate care of Divine Providence. No man, by his natural powers, can command the sun to shine, or the rain to fall, upon the earth. His reason indeed enables him to provide imperfectly in their absence, and he may have many contrivances and substitutes: for he may have artificial light and heat, as well as artificial cisterns, for temporary use. But these will all be partial and inefficient: and, for the growth of his seed, to complete the joy of harvest, he must wait the Lord's time, both for the quickening ray, and for the refreshing dew.

In like manner, no human being, with all the powers of the most expanded intellect, can, by reasoning, procure the influence of a single ray of divine light upon the soul. Man has provided himself, notwithstanding, with many substitutes—with secondary and inferior helps—in his own will and wisdom. But attempts to reach heaven in this way are as futile now, as was the tower of Babel formerly.

Now, if the righteous, or they, who, in simplicity and sincerity, endeavour to perform their duties, cannot always command this influence; how is it possible that those who build upon the success of their own reasonings and inquiries for an advancement in true Religion, can hope to secure the blessing? Will these argue that they can do without it?

Admitting that there is such an influence; it must come in its own way: speculative Reason cannot bring it. If they deny such an influence, then Reason must be their God or the power in which their confidence is placed; and no argument from Scripture can make an impression. If they admit such an influence, yet bring themselves to believe and act as though they can do without it; then they set up an authority for themselves, while God hath established an authority for others; and flatter themselves that their own is what preserves the world from error, and *that* insisted upon in Revelation, is what deceives the multitude, and leads its simple-hearted votaries into nothing but Enthusiasm.

If God is pleased, in order to try the faith and love of his children, to withdraw his light *even from them* for a season, and to leave them as in *the darkness and shadow of Death*, can we conceive that he will impart it to the proud, and to those who in the confidence of their own sufficiency will admit nothing else but human wisdom for their guide and counsellor? But it is to be observed, that although the memory, what if I say the intellect, may be stored with traditional truths from the fountain of revelation itself, which some may plead as their sufficient help; yet these truths, excellent as they are, must imbue the mind with their own spirit, and impregnate it with their own virtue, before they can nourish the pure seed of God in the soul, and produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit in life and conduct. The history of mankind

from the beginning of the world, as recorded in Scripture, is nothing but the history of the Lord's dealings with them by his Spirit. These dealings therefore existed *before* the era of Scripture; and it cannot be rationally supposed that, *since* the first date of these Sacred Writings, no spiritual operations have taken place but what are transmitted to us in them.

We prove from Scripture that the holy spirit is not only occasionally withdrawn from the good, but that it ceases to strive with the wicked. The righteous of all ages, whether Patriarchs, Prophets, or Apostles, could only exercise their spiritual gifts in prophecies or in miracles, as they were immediately influenced by its power. That which proved like their daily bread, was the object of their daily petition: and their holy inspiration did not prevent their faith from being sometimes low. Of this David was an illustrious example; and Paul himself, though endowed with the gift of healing, did not exert this gift for his own interest or convenience, when he saw meet to leave his sick friend and companion behind him.* It was through instant watching and prayer that divine influence was renewed, and divine ability received to work the works of God.

The momentary lapse of faith in Moses, the guilt and contrition of David, the humiliation of Isaiah, the incredulity of Jonah, the bitter complaints of Jeremiah, the deep baptisms of Ezekiel, the defection of Peter, the unbelief of Thomas, and the many spi-

* 2 Tim. 4. 20.

ritual trials of Paul, prove to what a state of temporary desertion, these holy men seemed at times to be reduced.

On the other hand, the Almighty declared that his Spirit should not always strive with man; and many of the Lord's servants testified that the heart might be hardened against the feeling of good, and the conscience seared as with a hot iron.

It is hence fair to conclude that the *measure of the Divine spirit* in the soul, is not like a faculty or instrument of the mind, to be played with, whenever the creature is pleased to use it. The memory may be exercised, the fancy may be exercised, and the judgment may be exercised, at all times, with more or less vigour, according to the natural humour and tone of the animal spirits—except indeed in idiots and the insane. But if any man can exercise his spiritual faculties, so as to *command* a morsel of daily bread to restore his hungry soul, or a drop of heavenly rain to allay his thirst, or the feeblest ray of divine light to illuminate his darkness, he has attained to a height and excellence in spiritual growth, which no servant of the Lord, however dignified, that we read of, ever experienced. Who then can say that these things are attainable by the use of any faculties, which, in his own way and time, and at his own will and pleasure, man has the power to exercise? And surely no one will say that, if there be a God, and man an accountable being, these things can be dispensed with. But these positions being

taken for granted, the conclusion follows of course, that Divine assistance is as necessary to man as his Providence is to the outward creation: and, moreover, this assistance never was, and—unless the moral scheme be changed—never can be, afforded, but through the medium of his Spirit.

Sect. V.

Of Wisdom, Divine and Human, Faith, Enthusiasm, Revelation, &c.

Proposition IV.

As the rational faculties, or natural powers of the understanding are always more or less at the command and under the controul of man; and the ratio of increase in the seed of Divine grace, is not in proportion to the speculative knowledge of Divine Truth, but in proportion to heartfelt obedience and living operative Faith; it follows demonstratively that the discursive or argumentative faculty is not the source, discoverer, and framer, by any intellectual process, synthetic or analytic, of Divine Truth in the soul.

We are now prepared to consider the fourth Scripture Truth, which indeed is partly implied in the two last propositions, and follows as a natural conclusion. But for the sake of more clearness, at the expense of some repetition, I shall comprise in this section a few observations, nearly relating to the subject, on Human

and Divine Wisdom, Faith, Enthusiasm, and Revelation. I consider that each proposition, or truth, resting, as it does, on the general testimony of Scripture, though expressed in other words, is complete in itself; and, requires no form of syllogism, to make it more clear. I do not therefore pretend to follow any precise logical method in these remarks.

The latter part of the proposition at the head of this section, more particularly claims our attention, at the present time; as it seems to include the sense of the two preceding members of the sentence, which have already been partially under notice. Indeed I have found it difficult to separate the consideration of one part of this subject from that of another.

It seems to me of the greatest importance to mark the distinction between Human Wisdom and Divine, in other words, between the unassisted power of the discursive faculty, and the Divine effective Word of Life—the spiritual source of all-availing Truth in the Soul,—to mark it, I say, in the strongest possible manner.

I know that it has been the wish of some enlightened moral and religious writers to bring them as closely together as possible, and, if not to identify them, at least to make them always coincide. It has been said, perhaps justly, that the instruments God has given to enlighten the mind with natural and religious truth, can neither deceive, when properly exercised, nor contradict each other in their evidence. Hence it has been taken for granted that the cultivation

of one necessarily leads to the cultivation of the other, and that their real ends and objects must be the same. Consequently, this plausible conclusion satisfies the supporters of human reason; and if they are opposed by the *exclusive* advocates of Revelation, they are more likely to push their own doctrines to an extreme. For when the proposition is extended, so far as to make the instrument, whose office it is to acquire natural truth, competent also to investigate and judge of that which is supernatural, we are bound to hesitate before we admit the conclusion—a conclusion by no means following from the premises.

Of Wisdom, Divine and Human.

Before I proceed, I shall insert a few passages from Scripture, to establish in principle, the truth announced in the proposition relative to the difference between Divine and Human Wisdom; and, for this purpose, the 1st Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians appears to contain as strong a testimony as could well be adduced.

"It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, *the world by wisdom knew not God*, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

" For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

Paul himself, dignified as he was with human acquirements, testifies of himself, " And, I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—— " What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him: even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—— " Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let

him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain."*

He also declares, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and *all knowledge*,—and have not charity, I am nothing."

The Apostle James likewise distinguishes between human wisdom and divine, in these words: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."†

I know of no better way in which an identity or difference can be proved, in nature and source, between any two principles, than by showing that their modes of operation, and common effects, are identical or different.

Now, we perceive that if any thing is to be gathered from Scripture more clearly than another, it is the

* 1 Cor. Chap. 1. 2. 3. † Chap. 3. 13.

distinction between Divine wisdom and Human,—between the outward evidence of Sense and Reason from things seen, and the inward evidence of Faith from things unseen,—between natural and spiritual discernment,—or the outward light of the understanding and the inward light of the Holy Spirit.

But if these distinctions in Scripture be founded in truth, it cannot be right for men to attempt to join principles in close union, which are discordant in their nature and elements: nay, it is clear, that confusion will be the result.

If the Reason of man and the source of Divine Revelation in his heart are only different degrees of the same principle, as branches from the same root, they should always be in harmony, and what is true of one should be true of the other also. But we know that they are often in direct opposition in the mind;—Reason pleading hard against the gentle intimations of Truth, and these against the suggestions of Reason;—interest, expediency, and sometimes necessity, being strongly urged against internal convictions; and, on the other hand, internal convictions, with ignominy, disgrace, death itself in prospect, resisting the endearments of social life, the allurements of public honour, the persuasions of friends and kindred, and all the sophistry of a wily, subtle, and seducing reason.

We know again, that if Faith and Reason were dependent on the same kind of evidence, they would always act in union and lead to the same point. But

the common sense of mankind agrees to place them in contrast, and the language of Scripture confirms the distinction. The evidence on which each builds its conclusions is widely different. Faith leans on the evidence of things *not seen*, far beyond human calculation, and has always respect to its Author: Reason, upon the evidence of things which *are seen*, within the range of natural causes and effects, and may determine to act without any reference to God. The one has a meek reliance upon invisible help; the other has a stronger reliance on its own outward precautions.

If we come to Human Wisdom and Divine, we find them, so far from agreeing as such, opposed to each other both in principles and practice;—in origin as well as in fruits.

For we either admit that there is a wisdom which comes immediately from God, or we do not: If it be not admitted, there is an end of all argument, so far as the rule and authority of Scripture, as a basis of reasoning, is concerned. If we admit it, we must believe, that this wisdom is of a very different nature from that which is earthly or natural, the product of Human Reason. And the distinction is proved by their fruits.

The one is short-sighted, vain, contentious, and presumptuous. It puffs up the mind, and produces a loftiness of deportment, which overlooks the unassuming characteristics of a better wisdom: The fruits

of Divine wisdom are meekness, gentleness, humility, peace, mercy, charity, and brotherly kindness.

Between such opposite fruits there can be no possible agreement. And we are told distinctly, the one is of earth and the other from above. Consequently, the increase of one is the decrease of the other. Now if it be argued, that such opposite kinds of wisdom are identified in their source, and differ only in degree; is it not easy to perceive that every manifestation of Divine truth will be in danger of being rejected, which does not come in the form of a *regular proposition*, or strike the mind with that clearness of outward evidence, which, we are told, every one is bound to receive, before he gives his assent?

For if the outward evidence seem weak, and the appearance mean, as did that of Christ to the Jews, the lordly powers of reason may be expected to dismiss the humble visitant with something like this declaration, "we will not have this man to rule over us." And, it is clear, if divine light should ever insinuate itself into the soul of man, by gentle approaches, without any ostentatious display, it must inevitably be withstood by these arrogant centinels, who thus constitute themselves watchmen duly authorised to challenge every unexpected intrusion, and to admit none but a special ambassador, bearing his credentials in high state. Some have taught us to believe that the situation of mind best fitted to receive this heavenly visitation and to profit by it, is

that of humble adoration, and meek dependence on the mercy of providence, in which the wisdom of man is laid prostrate in the presence of divine power; so that the mind is made willing to receive, as a free boon of grace, the smallest testimonial of the Almighty ruler's compassionate regard:—But, between this opinion and that previously stated, the difference is wide indeed.

From all that has been said, therefore, I think it must be evident, that the mind, when livingly and effectively employed in seeking Divine Truth, and appropriating it to true spiritual union, is placed in a situation very different from that in which it is thought to be best qualified to collect, arrange, and establish, the principles of speculative knowledge *of any kind.* Its powers are differently engaged, and the immediate effect of this knowledge is to fill the head, instead of adding true spiritual substance, which can alone produce the *fruit of righteousness in the meekness of wisdom.*

In the one case there appears to be more of intellectual passiveness than activity: In the other more of creaturely activity. Yet the mind itself is not wholly passive; for the spiritual senses are awakened and exercised in warm and living aspirations to the source of wisdom. It is only those active principles which would oppose the admission of this heavenly messenger into the mind that must be silenced. And human wisdom was never yet freely disposed to open

the gate in submissive meekness to that wisdom which is from above. It is naturally too curious and inquisitive, and suspicious, and withal too self-important for such an office. For it is not the nature of this divine wisdom to make its entrance with display and pomp and great assumption of authority. It comes in humility, and in humility must be received, or it quickly departs.

What man may attain by his own power, he claims as his own right; and is too apt to look upon the faculties by which he makes discoveries and ascertains physical and moral laws, in their exercise at least, as if they were independent of his Maker. But if the grace and spirit of God be a *free* gift,—an unconstrained illumination which is vouchsafed according to certain dispositions in the moral agent,—a fact we must believe, if we believe the Scripture, then it is impossible for man to attain it by his own power and to claim it as his own right. For the sum of all his learning, even if it were to consist of unmixed speculative truth in Divine mysteries, could amount to no more than this; that he had a knowledge of his duties, of the object of his Being, of his Maker's attributes, and of some of the revealed glories of the heavenly kingdom, of his natural infirmities, and of the Divine assistance on certain conditions being freely offered him. After the attainment of all this knowledge, it would still be incumbent upon him to put so much of it as concerned him in practice, to the very letter, in

his own individual experience, and to exhibit, in "the meekness of Wisdom," the *fruits* of peace and righteousness.

It is therefore a high attainment of Reason to know that it is not by arguments, however clear and just, and unanswerably deduced, that man can succeed in reaching Heaven. Though reason may teach him to know the way, he must tread the path by another guide. A man may study the principles of navigation in his closet, he may know the latitude of different places, and the courses he ought to steer; and after much traverse sailing, be prepared to find his exact situation. But when launched on the ocean, if he does not keep an ever-watchful and steady eye upon his compass—an instrument which he may not have occasion to see when learning the science—mysterious and inexplicable in its movements, yet with some trifling exceptions, an unerring guide, he will run a thousand risks of utter destruction. And thus it is when launched on the ocean of life; though the mind may have been prepared with a knowledge of the right course and of its many difficulties, nothing but vigilant attention to an interior Guide can preserve it from ruin. So that, as the pointings of this Guide do not wholly supersede the outward knowledge; on the other hand, the acquirements of outward knowledge do not supersede this invisible direction. For as the animal powers, however perfect, do not in man supersede the use of the intellectual faculty, so this faculty, however perfect, does not

supersede the exercise of the animal powers. The head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee; nor Reason to Sense, I have no need of thee; nor the Spiritual Faculty to Reason, I have no need of thee.

But Reason, in its vanity of research, and capacity of comprehension, is ever seeking to know more of divine mysteries than God has seen meet to reveal. As a power purely speculative, it is always soaring above the meek testimony with which Divine Truth gently solicits the humble mind. Hence, by its very constitution, it is disposed to rival, as it were, and set itself against, Omniscience.

If Reason, or the unassisted powers of human research, had been sufficient for the highest duties of our moral nature; no revelation, whether ordinary or extraordinary, natural or supernatural, had been necessary.

But an extraordinary revelation having unquestionably been made, to say nothing of ordinary, it follows that Reason is not to be considered, and was not, sufficient.

Therefore, as it is not sufficient, and yet may have its uses, it would be very desirable to know the precise limits within which its lawful interference is circumscribed, according to that saying of Bacon, "Here, therefore, I note this deficience, that there hath not been to my understanding sufficiently inquired and handed, the true limits and use of reason in spiritual things." At the same time it is not likely

that they can be clearly defined; when we consider what delicate distinctions the natural use, lawful use, and necessary use, of any faculty which God has given to man, necessarily involve. And when we come to that, which, ever restless in its inquiries, presumes even to search into the secret counsels of the Almighty, and compare it with the meek Intelligencer of the Heart; it is no wonder that we should find many persons unwilling to abate of its pretensions, and ready to undervalue the intimations of an instructor so very opposite. It is no wonder that the relation of knowledge to practical piety, though in themselves entirely distinct, should be thought to approximate so close as to establish an indissoluble affinity; and that the attainment of one should be thought an indispensable help to the exercise of the other. But, though they are distinct, the attempt to establish an *exclusive* exercise either way, in the present state of man—as wholly on the side of Reason, or wholly on the side of Revelation—is only another instance of that disposition to extremes to which we are so generally prone,—a disposition which is not satisfied with adopting a simple truth, but supposes the adoption of it must infer the rejection of another truth; because there have been superficial reasoners, who have contended with each other, in a spirit of opposition, as the avowed advocates of each opinion exclusively.

The human mind without knowledge, is in the state of the brute animal: and again, Piety without knowledge is a state almost inconceivable; for he

that cometh to God must know that he exists. To be operated upon by the power of the Deity without knowing it, and to be unconscious of design, harmony, and order, is the state of blind impulse or instinct, analogous to that of the stone, vegetable, and wonder-working insect.

It is, however, certain, that Reason, which is properly the instrument of human knowledge, cannot be more nobly or usefully employed, than in directing the view of the mind to that which was sent as a better guide to aid its natural imbecility.

When the Divine Author of the Christian Religion promulgated his doctrines to the world, he referred his disciples to the power and operation of his own Spirit in their hearts, and the multitude he taught in parables. He taught them by analogical reasoning: because, it seemed that no pure and spiritual truths, free from earthly admixture, could be comprehended by any other mode of explanation, or find so easy an entrance through their benighted reason, to the spark of divinity, almost smothered as it was in the heap of traditions, customs, national prejudices, and ceremonies. He told them "the kingdom of Heaven was within them," but he told them by similes, which, unless they had been rational beings, competent to perceive the relations of things, they could not have understood.

Though conveyed with heavenly wisdom, and divinely illustrated, and confirmed by mighty wonders, how hardly did the light of his truth pierce the veil

even in the hearts of his followers; and how impenetrable were the obstacles by which his wisdom and authority, and miracles, were withstood, in the minds of the great, and noble, and wise of this world! Their reasonings were interposed like a dark cloud between them and the Sun of Righteousness; and a thousand vague objections were urged as arguments against his divine mission. Hence, because they would neither see, nor hear, nor understand, with their spiritual senses, though they saw, and heard, and reasoned, with their natural faculties, he rejected them; and chose the simple to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the mighty. For he counted the wisdom of the world as foolishness; for as much as *the world by its wisdom could not know God.* Wise as they were, these master-builders were rejected; they did not even know *the chief stone of the corner.* And we have many master-builders in the present day, to whom this corner stone, *elect and precious,* is "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence," as it appeared formerly to the great Sanhedrim of the Jews—as much, perhaps, because its humble manifestation offends their reason, as because the discipline of the Cross, which it enjoins, is a stumbling block in their way.

Here, then, we have two examples; one in which Reason was employed, and another in which it was rejected. As the outward Senses were employed as inlets to the understanding, Reason was employed only as an assistant in opening the spiritual eye to

perceive the excellence of the precepts, the value of the doctrines, the force and beauty of Divine truth; as far as they could be seen through the medium of outward things. As John pointed to the Messiah, Reason pointed to the Truth, the pure witness in every then partially awakened soul. It instructed the disciples, as they had never before been instructed, in the knowledge of a gift, which, through the matchless favour of God, they themselves, and every living mortal, possessed, in their own bosoms,—in the knowledge of a seed implanted by the Creator, the foundation on which they were to build their Faith. It led them to the light, but it was unable to do more: it could not impart to them a ray, much less fill them with its glory: and it left them to its guidance,—to self-denial, obedience, faith, resignation, thanksgiving, prayer, and adoration. It was employed as a meek and humble minister, when passion was still, and vain-glory was laid asleep, and every talent was devoted to the Great Master's service.

Let us, on the other hand, consider under what circumstances, the reason, or prudence, or wisdom of man, unenlightened by a Divine Teacher, was rejected.

It was rejected, when it presumed on learning and tradition to know the way of Salvation better than Truth itself; to prescribe to its Author the terms, and mode, and circumstance of his coming, on which alone it would be pleased to admit the heavenly messenger. It was rejected when it did not approach for Divine

instruction in the docile state of a little child, or in the prostrate attitude of a supplicant; when it puffed up the soul with pride instead of bowing it with contrition. It was rejected when it put itself forth as the only instrument of knowing divine things, and only medium of attaining to heavenly virtue; and closed up the narrow way to that Seed of life and power in every heart, which could only be quickened by the supernatural influence of the Sun of Righteousness himself.

Faith.

If we contrast the description of FAITH as given by the Apostle with that of Locke, we may well conclude that they are distinct in principle, in operation, and in effect.

And if we also compare the TRUTH and LIGHT of the Gospel, with the *Truth* and *Light* of Locke, we shall perceive a like discrepancy.

"What is Truth," says Locke, "was an enquiry many ages since: Truth seems to me to signify nothing but the joining or separating of signs, as the things signified by them do agree or disagree one with another."—"And this is what, by another name, we call a *Proposition.*"

"*Light*, true light in the mind, is or can be nothing else but the evidence of the Truth of any proposition."

"*Faith* is nothing but a firm assent of the mind." "It is the assent to any Proposition, not made out by the deduction of Reason, but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication."

So that, according to Locke, *Truth* is a Proposition: *Light*, the evidence of the Truth of a Proposition: and *Faith*, the Assent to a Proposition, on the credit of another.

But, according to Scripture, Light, true light in the mind, is the illumination of the Divine Spirit: Truth is the *Revelation* or spiritual object seen and understood by this light, and by no other: and Faith is that Sense or holy assurance given it by God, and increasing from one degree to another, by which the mind is enabled to feel and know, not from outward evidence, that the Light and Truth it contemplates are real, and that they are sent from God.

Now, as far as Locke's definitions are concerned, Light, Truth, and Faith, are objects of natural Reason: But as far as Scripture is concerned, they are objects of a Spiritual principle. And it may be said of them, as was said by an eminent writer, of *Faith*, *Love*, and *Humility*, that "however these names be common and vulgar, and make no extraordinary sound, yet do they carry such a mighty sense, that the tongue of man or angel can pronounce nothing more weighty or excellent. *Faith* having the same place in the Divine life, which *Sense* hath in the natural, and being indeed nothing else but a kind of

Sense, or feeling persuasion of spiritual things: it extends itself unto all divine truths."*

Hence, we may perceive, that there is a living Faith, and a dead Faith; the one a shadow, the other a substance: as there is a Religion of the Head and a Religion of the Heart; the one theoretical, the other practical. Knowledge is the object of one, Feeling of the other: and these two are far from being inseparable. Vital or practical Religion may exist in the bosom of the simple: and the heart of the learned may be an utter stranger to its emotions, notwithstanding the head is filled with creeds and dogmas. Notional religion, unaccompanied with inward virtue, like the religion of the Pharisee, turns away the mind from that state of contrition, in which heartfelt religion can only be experienced.

It is with practical Religion as with practical Chemistry, but in a much stronger sense. He that will not take the crucible in his own hand, and attend the furnace himself, and patiently wait the different stages of refinement, can know little of the matter as he ought to know it. But seeing this process is to be figuratively accomplished in his own heart, when, instead of labouring at the furnace, he contents himself with some general notions of the principles of the science, he can never purge away "the dross and tin and reprobate silver."

We see therefore the danger which every one incurs, who relies upon reasoning more than upon

* Scougal's Life of God in the Soul, page 18.

feeling; upon faith in propositions or outward assent, more than upon heartfelt obedience; and who makes religious and moral duty a study of the head, instead of a warm vital impulse of the heart.

However the exclusive cultivation of Reason may clear the head from visionary delusions and from a heated enthusiasm; it will chill the ground of the heart, and take away all its genial virtue. This close vigilance of Reason in defending the mind from one error tends to the opposite extreme. It represses the growth of the good seed while it represses the tares: and an outward acknowledgment of religious duties, merely because others acknowledge them, and because they are deemed expedient, will be the only return to the bountiful Giver; instead of fervent gratitude, and that faithful cooperation with the heavenly Seed, which, according to the ability afforded, will gain the *thirty*, *sixty*, or *hundred fold increase*, to the praise and glory of the great Husbandman.

"Faith," says the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the "*substance* of things hoped for; the *evidence* of things not seen."

Now, as the assent to a proposition may be an outward formal assent, it cannot in this sense coincide or agree with the Apostle's definition of Faith as a substance. For the bare acknowledgment of a Truth, and the spiritual appropriation of a Truth, by which it is made, as it were, one with the recipient, are things perfectly different. And it is the spiritual appropriation only, when applied to spiritual truth,

that can be called a substance. But this is a work of the spiritual faculties, not of the natural. It is the divine assimilation of the daily bread that comes down from heaven in the soul, bringing it more and more into the divine image; and "producing an assured confidence in the reality and worth of eternal invisible things, and that God will infallibly perform what he has promised, whereby the believer is as confident of them as if they were before his eyes and in his actual possession."* Now, as the first or formal assent is the work of the understanding, it cannot apply to the Apostle's definition of Faith. It is as different from vital operative Faith, as the shadow is from the substance.

Again, "Faith is said to be the evidence of things not seen"—that is, the evidence for which nothing visible can be a sufficient voucher; because the things are spiritually discerned which are the objects of true Faith. But the *Faith* of Locke, according to his own declaration, that "Reason must be our last Judge and Guide in every thing," even of Revelation itself, requires the attestation of that Faculty whose whole business it is to judge *by things seen*; that is, by miracles or other outward proofs, before it will yield its assent. Consequently, this is not the Faith that is defined by the Apostle. True Faith is that "which worketh by Love."†

Almost every allusion that is made in Scripture to FAITH, justifies its spiritual meaning; and, in a

* See Cruden, verbo Faith. † Gal. 5. 6.

natural sense, would be unintelligible; as the following: "That your *faith* should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: And this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even our Faith.*"†

By the gospel of Christ is the righteousness of God revealed from *faith to faith*, as it is written, the just shall live by *faith.*‡

Religion, therefore, being a practical and not a theoretical concern, it is not the knowledge of Truth, nor yet the formal Assent to it, though it be divine, but the practical and substantial appropriation of Truth, that will be availing. For knowledge alone, if it does not regulate the affections and mend the heart, is but an unprofitable possession. We have high authority for concluding, that although a man should have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, and even have supernatural gifts, as that of prophecy and of faith to remove mountains; nay, and have eloquence to speak as with the tongue of an Angel; yet if he have not the gentle flame of Charity in his breast, his other acquirements will profit him nothing.

Now Charity, in its comprehensive meaning, is not an endowment of the understanding; it is a virtue of the heart, springing from the living seed of God. And it is but one amongst the graces or virtues which are brought into light as fruits, from the same seed:

* 1 Cor. 2. 5. † 1 John 5. 4. ‡ Rom. 1. 17.

and, as it is rooted and grounded in the soil of humility, so the fruits are kept alive in it as their congenial element, and wither away before pride, presumption, and the blighting contagion of what is emphatically termed in Scripture Man's Wisdom.

Enthusiasm.

The manifestations of Truth, in all awakened by its Divine influence, are accompanied with such humility and conscious integrity of heart; and are attended with such entire subjugation of the light and vain propensities of human nature, as pride, enthusiasm, and self-love, and with such undoubted evidence of their reality, that they are known to be genuine by the same Divine influence which has impressed them upon the mind. It matters not whether such as have been inattentive, and have not often experienced these manifestations, doubt the evidence, and call the notion mystical, and require other proof: On the contrary, such as are really favoured with them,—if they have only recently felt the impressions, like those who have been blind newly restored to sight, or those who have been deaf whose ears are suddenly unstopped—are awakened as it were to a new sense, to which the others *by their own fault* are strangers; and therefore, these will not be reasoned out of this spiritual sense any more than they will suffer themselves to be reasoned out of the evidence of any of

their natural senses. For, as truly as the sheep know the shepherd's voice, they recognize the voice of the gentle monitor speaking in their hearts.

I am well aware it has been argued, that, unless Human Reason be interposed, as the last Judge and Guide to determine the question, the voice of Truth cannot be distinguished from the voice of Error; because Satan, it is said, is able to transform himself into an Angel of Light. But I cannot even then admit the argument to be sound or the inference to be just. The Prince of Darkness, in all his transformations, can never appear any other than the Prince of Darkness; when he is seen in the Light of Truth. And there is no other Light which can discover his specious appearances and detect his wiles. When he comes in the character of a Deceiver, he meets Reason on its own ground; and if he be only opposed by Reason, he will generally succeed.

It cannot for a moment be imagined that the subtle insinuations of the Arch Enemy and the gentle monitions of Truth, *sound the same* in the spiritual ear. By the outward understanding, it is allowed, that they cannot be distinguished but by outward evidence. This, however, is not the question. The question is whether the true sheep are to know their master's voice by the spiritual ear or by the outward faculties.

"I am the good Shepherd," said Christ, "and know my sheep, and *am known of mine.*"—The true shepherd "*calleth his own sheep by name*: and the sheep follow him; *for they know his voice.* And a

stranger will they not follow, *for they know not the voice of strangers.*"*

I take it for granted that this declaration applies to the spiritual intercourse which Christ, the true Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, promised to maintain with his flock and family throughout all ages of his church: and therefore I do not adduce any other passages of Scripture to support this opinion; because it appears sufficiently obvious.

Now, as the Lord hath ever spoken by his Spirit, his voice can only be heard by the Spirit. But is Reason, or any outward faculty, to judge, whether the spiritual ear is shut or opened? If the spiritual ear be *opened*, and the voice of an enemy be heard; then, if it cannot be distinguished from the voice of the true Shepherd, the sheep *do not know* the Master's voice. But this is contrary to Scripture—even to the express declaration of Christ—and therefore the conclusion is false.

If the spiritual ear is *shut*, the sheep are not obedient to the Shepherd's call, and are incapable of hearing his voice; and while it is so closed, if a stranger should accost them, such may reason as much as they will about the external proofs of Inspiration, whether they be few or many, and weak or strong, they are still liable to be deceived, let them employ never so many tests. On the one hand Vanity may insinuate that they are inspired, though by an

* John 10. 4. 5.

enemy; on the other, Scepticism may decide that the Master's voice itself is nothing but enthusiasm.—Hence, in order that it may be known whether the mind be influenced by the spirit, or only actuated by the natural impulses of the creature, it is required especially that he be living conformably to those institutions, which become a chosen vessel fit for the Master's service:—In other words, in order that the sheep may, without hesitation, know the Shepherd's voice, it is necessary that they be *true* sheep of his fold—not nominal disciples—nót interested followers—not sluggish in their obedience and cold in their attachment; but simple, humble, gentle, watchful, and obedient. What could the devices and arts of an enemy avail against such qualities and defences as these? It is not with such humble virtues as meekness, gentleness, obedience, and watchfulness unto prayer, that the Adversary contends. It is with the loftiest powers of man as man, in those whom he cannot foil by sensuality—with Reason itself, and its presumption, in all its forms, that he engages: it is before these that he lays his baits, and spreads his wiles, that he may insnare. It is by the medium of his own instruments and machinations—by worldly arts and worldly counsels,—that he carries on an insidious warfare against the Spirit and its fruits: for he does not attack it openly. It is, while the duty of watchfulness is neglected, that he seduces, *what can only be seduced*, Reason itself. For the Spirit of the Lord—the *faithful* witness—the *unerring* Guide, cannot be

seduced from its allegiance. When *it is suffered* to be in its own watch tower, clothed with its own armour—"*the whole armour of God*"—then the heart is safe from any assault. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of *strong* holds; casting down imaginations, and *every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God*, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

But when an *outward* guide and protector, like Reason, is presumed to be sufficient, and trusted in to keep the watch, and to distinguish between spiritual light and darkness, it is ever liable to be deceived. The spiritual faculties never yet sought for outward attestations concerning the objects presented to them. They need no such attestations. It is the jealousy of Reason and the weakness of man which require them: and doubt or suspicion is the root from which in every age of the world, and in every individual, the inquiry has proceeded.

Is it, therefore, reasonable to think that the *true sheep* can *doubt* when they hear the *true shepherd's* voice, or can mistake the voice of the Arch Deceiver for it? If the spiritual ear is really opened, and the spiritual voice is really uttered, is it possible that any outward human interposition, like that of speculative Reason, can strengthen the conviction? Speculative Reason may be employed, perhaps lawfully, in producing rational conviction, by means of outward proofs, in those whose spiritual ear is *not yet* opened,

and whose spiritual eye is *not yet* divinely anointed. But when the ear is *already* opened, and the eye *already* anointed, the mystery of Godliness can never be confounded with the mystery of iniquity, however specious the latter may be in its appearances; and therefore the suggestions of Satan *cannot* be mistaken for the Inspiration of God.

If the Spirit be not sufficient to support its own cause against the powers of darkness, but requires the aid of outward discernment: then *he that is in the world is greater than he that is in the hearts of his believing children as their appointed Saviour.* But this is contrary to Scripture: and therefore the supposition cannot stand. The Spirit is invincible. Is any outward faculty of man, then, to be made the mediator between God and his spirit, and necessary to seal the conviction that he speaks intelligibly to that which is of Himself? If the voice of the Spirit be a real influence or utterance, as we cannot doubt it is, it is as fair to conclude that it may be heard *without reasoning*, as that an outward sound may be heard, or an outward object may be seen, *without reasoning.*

Now, as the divine principle of Light and Truth is distinguished from Human Wisdom in its origin and effects, so it is distinguished from Enthusiasm. These are the two extremes, toward which, on the one hand, the cold dogmatist in Religion, and on the other, the warm Zealot, naturally tend. They are equally remote from the temperate region of Truth. The one is ever roaming on the barren mountains of specula-

tion, where he can reap no fruit: and the other indulges his airy flight, in wild excursions, above the sober realities of life. He that is actuated by Enthusiasm, or the workings of the imagination, has constant access to his impetuous guide, and never fails to experience the buoyancy of this heated spirit. While the true believer is waiting in patience, and humility, and innocence, and meekness, to receive the counsels of divine wisdom, the Enthusiast—taking the word in its legitimate sense—is impelled by a fiery ardour in the pursuit of his object. While the one is regarding the pointings of his leader with fear and trembling, as at every step; the other, slighting all reasonable calculation of consequences, proceeds in a confident assurance, which is as much the effect of his own natural energies, as if he never entertained a thought that there was a supreme Power, to whom he owed allegiance, and on whom alone he ought to place his dependence.

Enthusiasm, like Reason, is always prepared for its own work. It moves in its own strength, and chooses its own path, and relies on its own ability. It claims however the guidance of heaven; and, therefore, unlike Reason, discards the labour and task of reflection, as if it were a painful obstacle in its movements.

But in speaking thus of Enthusiasm, let it not be understood that there may not be zeal in a good cause; and what we would say of temperate and holy zeal, we would also say of Reason lawfully employ-

ed; that it is a noble instrument in good hands, worthy of Him who gave it.

If it be a Truth that the spirit of the Lord does not always illuminate the mind, like a light placed at our command to use at our own discretion; it must be unnecessary to enlarge upon the weakness and destitution in which Man would be left, if, in seasons of spiritual darkness, this natural light of Reason, which was given to superintend the lawful concerns of life, were *also* to be removed.

No man can doubt that the immediate direction of the Lord is superior to man's own direction. But no man can doubt that it is as much above his controul as the breaking forth of the Sun from behind a cloud; and that it is only vouchsafed on certain conditions. Hence, though it be a Christian duty to be ever vigilant and earnest in supplication for this light, "to walk in the light and dwell in the light;" nevertheless, it is not always to be expected.

Placed, as man is, upon the Lord's earth, with senses and faculties designed for various outward ends, these senses and faculties must be duly exercised; and none of them with more care than the faculty of Reason. Now if it would savour of presumption in any one to shut his natural eyes when he might see, or close his natural ear when he might hear, in vain dependence upon a revelation to instruct him in the knowledge of what was without; so, it would be vain to imagine that the duties devolving upon our rational faculty might be suspended, and the understanding suffered

as it were to lie torpid for want of use, in the unreasonable expectation, that its deficiency—induced by our own indolence—would be supplied by a supernatural intimation on every occasion.

It cannot be doubted, that, for want of this distinction, many well-intentioned individuals have accumulated difficulties to themselves, and have been involved in errors which have proved as stumbling-blocks in the way of others.

The perfect state of dependence upon Providence, in which man can obey our Saviour's rule "to take no thought for the morrow" is compatible with that diligent labour which sows the seed, and waters the plant against the time of harvest. For he that will not sow must not expect to reap.

But, on the other hand, no man can pretend to limit the operation of the Holy Spirit, and to say "thus far shalt thou go." There cannot, there ought not, to be taken a step in life, without more or less necessity for some reference to a better Guide than our own fallible Reason. When our better light is withdrawn, Reason must be our direction; there is no alternative. But to let it lie dormant, in vain expectation of infallible guidance, is like tempting Omnipotence, and trusting to his delivering arm, when there is no outward need to display his providential interference.

The highest faculties are for the noblest ends, and the spiritual faculties relate to our eternal interests. It does not appear to be consistent with its high

office that the Divine principle in the soul should be engaged in every outward secular pursuit of life.

If in God we live and move and have our natural being; much more in Him have we our spiritual being.

But in our natural being, we possess a natural freedom of will, like the unconscious brute, into which natural freedom of will the consciousness of a moral Governor of the world does not enter. It is not so in our spiritual being: we cannot examine our moral constitution impartially, without being conscious of a Supreme Ruler. And this consciousness awakens a feeling of our wants and frailties, as moral agents; and of our necessary dependence upon God in every moral and religious act: so that our moral freedom is, or ought to be, wholly merged in obedience to the Divine will. To exercise our moral freedom of will beyond the line of duty, is to launch into irregularity, and to shake off the reins from our necks, which are laid upon us with a gentle and easy hand. But he that is conscious of body, soul, and spirit, being under the Divine government, naturally as well as morally, cannot emancipate himself in any single act from God's service; and, *whatsoever he does, whether he eats or drinks*, endeavours to do all to His Glory.

If we suppose that the Deity operates to a certain extent in brutes, through the medium of their instincts, for ends of which they are unconscious, and designs they are unable to comprehend, and that they have a distinct animal consciousness and spontaneity of their

own; in what way are these powers—the omnipotent agency of the Creator and the limited agency of the creature—adjusted to the general harmony of things? This is a difficult question which I feel myself incompetent to answer. We may suppose that this animal consciousness must vary in the different orders of animals, in the scale of being, according to the sphere of their animal operations. Vegetables are thought to have no consciousness at all; but they are acted upon by a Divine energy of life, (operating through the medium of physical agencies) perfect and unimpeded, in their natural state. Insects have a degree of animal consciousness and spontaneity, or power of moving and acting, confined to their limited sphere of operations; but they have no consciousness of the Supreme Intelligence, which regulates their wonderful instincts. The higher orders of animals have more of animal consciousness, in proportion to the sphere in which they have to act, and the variety of acts for which they are fitted; but they have no knowledge or consciousness of any Intelligence greater than that of man, which is immediately over them.

It is, upon the whole, I think to be presumed, that brutes like man, are enabled to perform some acts, which arise from their own spontaneity, within the sphere of their own consciousness, and not immediately under Divine influence. This, however, is a presumption to be received with great caution: the

slightest misapprehension would lead to error on either side.

From what has been said, we may conclude, as I have before noticed, that there is a two-fold agency of mind in all living animals:—the one agency proper and subordinate, by which the individual fills up its own station; the other general and supreme, by which it is made to conspire to the good of the whole: the one within the range of its consciousness; the other beyond it.

In man, this two-fold agency may be seen most conspicuously, at least in his moral relations; in some, diverging to the utmost limit of spontaneity or human liberty, as in the face of omnipotence; in others, to that of perfect accordance with the Divine will. In the good, as they submit to its guidance, the Divine agency leads to as perfect a conformity with the universal scheme of moral order, as the unconscious Instinct of the brute contributes to the order of the outward creation. In the rebellious, human agency proceeds in the way of disorder, to its utmost limit, with licentious daring: So that, as far as is in the creature's power, the agency, which is designed to be proper and subordinate, over-rules and impedes that which is general and supreme: And, on the other hand, the agency which is general and supreme, by the creature's willing subjection, keeps the inferior and human agency in harmony with all the Divine operations in God's universe.

In the *lowest* order of animals, the Divine energy seems to act with most unimpeded power. It is less and less concentrated in the successive links of the living chain upwards to man. It diverges more and more into their own specific acts, as living creatures are endowed with greater portions of mental power. And as it is possible that in human beings, who acknowledge least of Divine power, it should scarcely operate at all, so as to influence their conscious moral actions; so in those who are entirely obedient to its dictates, it is the *sole* governing principle.

Hence it follows, that at both ends of the chain,—in the most simple vital actions of an animal fibre, and in the most dignified acts of the inspired servant, the power of the Deity is most perfect, and contributes most to natural and moral order; because it is least opposed by any inferior influence.

The more the power of the Deity is suffered to fill the conscious mind, the less is there of human agency; the more of human agency, the less of the Divinity. What sublime views are thus opened of the human character! How consistent are they with Truth and Revelation: that man should have it in his power to reject or entertain the heavenly visitant!

The lowest animal has this Divine power; *not of free choice*, nor consciously: the holiest of men has it also; but consciously and willingly. And it then becomes his ruling principle,—his Divine counsellor,—his never-failing help,—a light to his feet and a lanthorn to his path,—his shield in the day of battle,—

his tower of refuge in the time of trouble,—his anchor in the storm, sure and steadfast:—It is the *good shepherd* that leads him *beside the still waters*, and enables him to lie down sweetly *in the green pastures of life.*

In conformity with the idea that a good man follows the prescribed path of duty, and fulfils his individual part in the moral system, as completely, as any of the unconscious natural agents, that are wholly governed by Supreme Wisdom, and cannot err, the following remarks suggest themselves.

How often does the arm of Almighty Power direct the steps of the righteous through the snares of this world, with unerring safety, though under a guidance, invisible but to the eye of Faith!

Through dangers and conflicting interests, the tenor of his course is seen to be maintained with uninterrupted firmness; and the duties assigned him in the scale of moral activity to be performed with holy vigilance and prayer.

The opposition of evil men; the opposition of false brethren, have not power to divert him from the path of rectitude. Their snares may be laid; and their open violence exerted, to thwart him in his progress: But a power which he sees not, confounds their machinations; and he moves along with noiseless tranquillity, in the race set before him. Could any thing short of Divine superintending wisdom direct in safety through such infinite confusion? As well might we suppose a self-moving orb, to pass unhurt, with a

steady course, through blazing comets, crossing each other's paths in endless physical disorder, as that a human being, in the present scene of moral darkness and perplexity, could direct his own steps aright by the natural powers of his own mind; or apply himself effectually to the duties for which he was designed, without providential guidance.

How consistent, then, with true philosophy is the saying, that "a good man's steps are ordered of the Lord!" How consistent with Christianity, and with the general harmony of the universe!

Revelation.

I have before adverted to a passage from the 'Essay on Human Understanding,' in which Locke does not seem so much to distinguish Reason from Revelation, as to endeavour to point out their coincidence. The passage is as follows:

"Reason is natural Revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of Truth, laid within the reach of their natural faculties: Revelation is natural Reason, enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which Reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away Reason to make way for Revelation,

puts out the light of both: and does much the same, as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope."*

Although the passage above quoted is well expressed and highly plausible, and may seem to contain an incontrovertible truth, yet I fear it is not calculated to give settled notions on the very important subject in question: and that when examined it will not tend to confirm the clear view of Reason and Revelation, which it appears at first sight to suggest.

If we take Reason for the whole intellectual nature of man, comprehending the principle of light and truth, for which I am contending, then the proposition of Locke, as above announced, can hardly be objected to. But if we take it to mean nothing more than the *outward* Searcher of Truth, then I conceive the high character which Locke has assigned to it in this proposition, can hardly be supported, or made to agree with Scripture. But it is sufficiently obvious that Locke does not mean that Reason should include any internal source of moral ideas, distinct from those furnished by a Discursive Faculty operating on the materials of Sensation and Reflection;—in other words, it is clear that he considers outward observation or experience to be the sole ground work of these notions: and therefore, it is to be inferred, that his use of the word Reason, in this passage, does not

* Book 4. Chap. xix. Sect. 4.

comprehend an internal light, monitor, or intelligencer, such as we have been assuming.

This being the case, the meaning becomes more involved than it appears, and requires some examination.

It is very certain that all truth is from the Eternal Source of Wisdom, and that whatever knowledge we possess must ultimately be referred to God as its Author: for he gave us the faculties by which we attain this limited knowledge of the natural and moral relations of things.

Now there are two ways in which it has pleased Divine Goodness to communicate it,—the one, *immediately*, by a ray emitted from the Fountain of Light into the mind,—the other, *discursively*, by the secondary operation of the mental powers. The latter is the fruit of human research—a discovery of knowledge, proportioned to the exercise and extent of the natural abilities, and has but little reference to the morality or immorality, the piety or impiety, of him that is imbued with it: The former is not, in the proper sense of the term, the fruit of outward research, nor a discovery proportioned to the cultivation and extent of the natural abilities; but it is a Divine Intelligence in the soul, freely communicated to all that are prepared and willing to receive it; which has always reference to the morality and piety of the recipient: and this alone is properly entitled to the name of Revelation.

These things being premised, if I might take the

liberty of making a few comments upon the passage, I would previously suggest the following definitions, as, in my opinion, more consonant with Scripture.

Reason is that power of the understanding whereby the eternal Father of Light enables man to discover that portion of Truth in art, science, moral and political economy, and natural Religion, which is laid within the reach of his speculative faculties: and its operation is wholly discursive, though it be grounded on certain first principles and rules of assent, which are deeply implanted in the constitution of the human mind.

Revelation is the immediate communication of Divine light from the fountain of Truth to the soul; and may be distinguished into ordinary and extraordinary, or natural and supernatural: yet these differ only in degree of fulness and brightness; they do not differ in kind.

Natural or ordinary Revelation is the limited effusion of Divine light upon the soul, working on the heart and conscience of every moral agent, and discovering some common principles of duty, which however distorted and obscured, are still universal, like the natural tastes and feelings; and form the foundation of all moral distinctions between right and wrong in human conduct, and the basis of religious feeling towards the Universal Parent.

Extraordinary or supernatural Revelation is natural Revelation enlarged by a new set of discoveries, communicated immediately by God to his faithful

servants, in different ages of the world; and outwardly verified and known,—by prophecies fulfilled, by miracles publicly wrought, and by the testimony and influence of inspired writings on the heart, left on record for the instruction of future generations.

Now, of natural Revelation, it may be remarked, that its operation is intuitive; felt, but not understood, by those who are outwardly ignorant of the real nature of the operating principle, as it is revealed in Scripture. The operation of this Divine influence upon the mind, is like the operation of light upon the organ of vision, instantaneous and without reasoning. The brute animal sees natural objects as distinctly as the philosopher; some brutes perhaps more so. Reason, however, may apply itself to the investigation of certain effects; and may discover the laws of optics, which the brute animal cannot know. But a blind man may be able to acquire an outward knowledge of these things, and make them objects of his speculation; just as a man spiritually blind may discourse theoretically of Divine things, and make them objects of his rational faculty. And thus, it is from the universal prevalence of moral feelings and emotions among mankind, that Reason is led to form its own imperfect moral system, and to ascertain the speculative Truths of, what is called, Natural Religion. Without these feelings as a basis, no such system would have been held obligatory; nay, it is questionable whether it would have ever been devised.

Ordinary Revelation, therefore, is an immediate

communication of the Divine counsel, by the free Gift of Grace, universally; though, for wise purposes, in different measures, in different ages; which has been vouchsafed from the beginning of the world, without respect of persons, according to the obedience of mankind to the dictates of Conscience; and it has never been wholly withheld.

But Extraordinary Revelation, though it was *immediate* to those of our fellow creatures, who, for various benevolent purposes to the Human Family, were thus supernaturally illuminated, is only *mediate* to us. We have still our own *immediate* Guide, who is willing to open if we will knock, to lead if we will follow, to instruct if we will hearken, to dispense if we will ask aright from the Eternal Fountain itself; though it may be, in the smallest measures of Divine Truth.

Now it is very possible that *our* Reason, as it was with some of those who witnessed them, may require the proof, which miracles afford, of any special communication being from heaven. But it cannot with truth be affirmed, that all those of our fellow creatures, who received such an immediate communication, required their reason to be previously assured by outward evidence, in this way, that it was from God, before they proceeded to act upon it. When the prophets of the Lord received commissions from Him, we do not read that they had each a miraculous sign to attest and seal the commission. Miracles were sometimes granted to those who were weak in Faith;

and sometimes reproof and a degree of punishment followed, when the *hesitating* servant, through a temporary lapse of attention to his Guide, demanded their evidence. It cannot therefore be doubted that the true servants knew their Master's voice; that they believed the internal impulse; and were fully satisfied with the illuminating evidence in their own minds; which Reason was neither competent to see nor apprehend; because it flashed upon another sense, the quickened eye of Faith. And the miracle that was sometimes wrought, after the delivery of the Prophet's message, or after his holy preparation for the event, followed, *not* as a confirmation to himself, but as an effect of the Divine commission, and the consequent holy conviction or Faith of the inspired servant. We know that thousands resisted even the outward evidence of miracles; consequently Reason alone could avail little, when the internal eye was closed by obstinacy, rebellion, and impiety.

It is clear, therefore, that something more than Reason was required to produce conviction of a Revelation, even though it was accompanied with miracles, being from God: For Reason may be so blinded as not to see when the clearest evidence is before it.

Hence, if Revelation be the greater light, and Reason the less,—a proposition that must surely be admitted—he who would apply the natural power of the human understanding to judge of Divine illumination, would act as absurdly as if he were to use a

candle to look at the sun! And whoever would scrutinize too narrowly a Divine intelligence by human Reason, while he was professing to *enlarge* human Reason, would run the risk of *putting out* this Intelligence, instead of profiting by its light. For the light of Heaven and the light of Earth are as little identified in their operation as the sun-beam and artificial flame. Whoever would put out the light of Reason to make way for Revelation, would do no more than eclipse the light that was common and inferior, for the temporary illumination of a better guide. For to put out the light of Reason utterly, under the pretence of making way for Revelation, would be to destroy the rational principle—an alternative no reasonable man could suppose necessary, nor would any but the wildest fanatic contemplate the idea.

Now the temporary suspension of Reason's interference, when the mind is better engaged, is no more the abolition or alienation of the faculty, than the temporary repose of fancy, and of the emotions of sensibility, would imply their total abolition, when the mind is absorbed in the grave deductions of Reason.

Therefore to apply these observations to the latter part of Locke's proposition above quoted, subject nevertheless to proper restriction, the conclusion appears to be liable to doubt, or to require considerable qualification, that "he who takes away Reason to make way for Revelation, puts out the light of both."

It must indeed be admitted, that to take away any of the mental faculties, and one so important as Reason, must, in so far destroy the intellectual constitution, and deprive the human mind of a light which, while on earth, is as necessary as the outward senses. But it by no means follows, that because Reason is required not to interfere too curiously in things above its reach, that it must therefore be taken away. For to repeat what is before asserted, he who silences the busy workings of fancy or of memory to make way for the laborious deductions of Reason, does not extinguish the former.

We may presume that it is a Truth as consistent with Philosophy as with Scripture, that he who keeps his eye *single* to the light of Heaven, in all matters of spiritual moment, will be figuratively *full of light:* while he, who seeks with the eye of Reason or outward observation to direct his steps to that better light, and uses it as the *questioner* of that better light—in as much as he endeavours to look at two kingdoms at once, whose interests are incompatible—*will be full of darkness.* For as Reason points to Earth, and Revelation points to Heaven, the eye that is intently fixed on one cannot steadily regard the other. Consequently, different objects being presented, the view must be distracted, if each is to be pursued with equal attention.

When Reason is well instructed, it immediately bows to Revelation: when it is not well instructed, it resists with all the vigour of which it is capable.

And, as one or other must have the ascendancy, the meek submission of Reason, instead of extinguishing the light of Heaven, causes it to burn with clearer and brighter evidence; while, on the other hand, in proportion as the light of Reason is exclusively cherished and exalted, the weaker is the heavenly flame.

Now, as none but a person devoid of understanding would attempt to persuade, or be persuaded, "to put out the eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope;" so none but such an one would advise a man to part with his Reason, or to become insane, in order that he might be divinely instructed; or conversely, to submit to Divine instruction by Revelation, as a necessary step to the loss of his rational faculty. The suppositions refer to something, that is, in both cases, improbable, and unnatural. For, in the present state of things, it is impossible to conceive a blind man capable of seeing, or a person filled with Divine light destitute of Reason. And therefore, as the supposition involves an absurdity, the comparison, however plausible it may seem, is inapplicable: nor do the advocates for the necessity of a true change in the nature of man, and for a life conformable to the teachings of God's holy spirit, by any means argue for the total abolition of Reason. They are, on the contrary, well aware, that the ignorant and unreasonable, who pretend to Divine illumination, without the inward virtue, are the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of true Religion.

In few words, it may be said, that, putting Reason and Revelation for certain conditions of the mind, Revelation without Reason would imply a state not fitted for this world, as Reason without Revelation would be unprepared for a better.

It has pleased the Almighty Parent to bestow those animal and rational powers which fit his creature man for the physical relations subsisting *below*: But it has also pleased Him to endow this noblest earthly image of himself with spiritual gifts and capacities adapted to moral relations, in order to prepare him for immortal happiness *above*. Therefore he is required to suffer no animal, sensual, or rational pursuit, to divert his mind from the one great object of his creation; and, further, he is required to make every act of his inferior nature subservient to his superior. If it be admitted that there are many rational pursuits, in which the immortal principle has no direct interest, it is obvious that the rational nature may be so occupied with them as to exclude from the mind those exercises, which nourish and keep alive this immortal seed: and, therefore, it is meet that these pursuits should be regulated by some fit standard, as well as the Appetites, Desires, and Affections—by that true standard which prescribes the limit to every thought, word, and deed; and suffers no rival to the Supreme Being in the heart.

I shall briefly recapitulate the chief heads of this argument, in order that I may conclude this section with a few remarks on the latter part of the Proposition prefixed to it.

According to the view that has been taken, it would seem to be proved by facts as well as Scripture testimony, that the Divine influence of the Holy Spirit is not to be commanded by any human being, upon all occasions, at his own will and pleasure.

But it must be admitted that the use of the rational powers is at all times at the command of every rational being: for it is scarcely necessary to make an exception for the period of life when Reason has scarcely begun to dawn, or for those occasions in which it may have suffered a partial eclipse by some physical or moral cause.

It must also be admitted that the ratio of increase in the growth of the seed of Divine life, is not in proportion to the speculative knowledge of Divine Truth: because knowledge of itself, or mere outward Faith, is said *to profit nothing*: and we know that learning does not necessarily subdue the will and amend the heart, so as to transform its natural affections into spiritual desires, conformable to the will of God.

It has already been made to appear that a true growth in religion can only take place, in proportion to heartfelt obedience to manifested duty, and to living operative Faith. We must therefore consider it a fundamental error to suppose that any growth

in grace or heavenly wisdom, from stature to stature, is to be effected by the addition of proposition to proposition, however excellent in themselves, laid up in the understanding, like dead and formal rules. For truth in Religion, living and substantial, and Heavenly Wisdom, or Divine Light, cannot surely be said to enter the mind in the form of propositions for the natural judgment to examine and admit or reject as it sees meet. The intimations of heavenly truth, often small and gentle, comparable to the gradual appearance of light at the dawning of day, cannot be expected to be attended with formal and tangible evidence. Yet according to the system I am opposing, so rigid are these human rules, unless the evidence of a Divine revelation be almost overpowering and accompanied with incontrovertible testimonials, it must be rejected. Consequently, the still small voice must pass unheeded, the meek counsellor be dismissed, the gentle reprover be silenced, and the gate of human wisdom closed against all humble applications; and it must only be opened to the loud knocking of specious demonstrations and unanswerable propositions.

It is a principle in philosophy, that nothing can rise higher than its source. If we apply it to this argument, we may infer, that as the proper business of Reason is to be conversant with natural things, and to ascertain their laws and relations, it cannot sit in judgment upon supernatural,—at least without betraying its weakness, and running the risk of mis-

apprehending them more frequently than the contrary. For the things of a man, or natural things, are naturally discerned; but the things of the spirit are spiritually discerned.

It follows therefore that the rational faculty distinguished from the spiritual, in its source and objects, as well as in its modes of operation, of cultivation, and of enlargement: and the conclusion seems to follow that the Argumentative Faculty is not the source and discoverer, by any process, *synthetic* or *analytic*, of Divine Truth in the soul.

For if it were supposed that *analytic* research might discover a Divine Truth; where should we look for the facts or materials out of which it should be formed? Analysis presupposes a mass of observations to be sifted and digested. But all the materials from which such a Truth could in this way be extracted, must be derived from outward observation: and outward observation cannot look into Heaven or any of its mysteries. Now unassisted Reason, however cultivated and enlarged, can only be conversant with earthly material things, and their abstract relations which constitute their laws. Whatever it may pretend to know of things above, in the world of spirits—as of the counsels of Divine wisdom, and the true nature of man, as a probationer on the earth—can never amount to any thing more than vague conjecture. Even the outward or speculative knowledge of these things can only be acquired by Revelation, mediate or immediate; much more, the inward, spiritual, or experi-

mental knowledge which brings man into the likeness of God, and into holy communion with *Him*, must be acquired by the immediate operation, diffusion, and influence of his Divine Power, through the medium of his Holy Spirit in the heart.

Surely then, man can have no *natural* power to form a Divine Truth from earthly conceptions; or to extract, as it were, heavenly sweets from gross material substances.

If any should suppose that the *synthetic method* is applicable to the acquisition of Divine Truth, it may likewise be urged, that the mind has no natural power capable of combining the simplest elements of Divine instruction together, so as to form a single Divine Truth. Because, as the elements themselves are from Inspiration, nothing short of Inspiration can add to the materials, and compact the spiritual growth.

For as it is improbable that any natural instrument should be able to join heavenly things to heavenly, by that true assimilating process, which makes them *one* in nature and essence: so no natural instrument can join earthly things to heavenly, because they are wholly incompatible. It is with Divine operative Truth in the spiritual part of man, as it is with natural food in the natural body, or with natural truth in the natural understanding: no substance can be assimilated to another, which it does not agree with in its nature; and no true union can be effected between them, but by the medium of the same principle which operates in each; as the natural energy in the

living body, the natural faculties in the mind, and the spiritual principle in the immortal spirit.

Now Truth added to Truth, spiritually and substantially, is like particle added to living particle in a seed, or fibre to organized fibre in a living body:—It is a true vital union. It does not mean the mechanical introduction of one element of knowledge to another, whether Divine or natural: this may be done, though not mechanically, by outward labour; as, it is possible for memory to lay up such a store in the mind. But it means, when applied to the spiritual faculties, a Divine communication of truth from the Spirit of Truth to the humble and obedient mind; constituting a perfect union between the recipient and that portion of Divine wisdom which is received.

I have been struck with the testimony of Milton as to the effect of loading the mind *outwardly* with knowledge, though it is not applied spiritually. But there is much wisdom in the remark, and I think it may be applied instructively in the present argument:

——————————— who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A Spirit and Judgment equal or superior,
(*And what he brings, what need he elsewhere seek?*)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains;
Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.*

Paradise Regained.

* This interesting passage is associated in the mind of a late Au-

Sect. VI.

Of Christ.

Proposition V.

This Divine Spirit is the Spirit of Christ himself, in all ages the same; and its manifestations are true revelations from above, perceived not by Sense nor by Reason, but by the inward eye of Faith.

The latter part of this Proposition has been already under our notice: the former part, therefore, comes now more immediately to be considered. The truth contained in it, is, indeed, of the last importance; and the proof of it is the sum and substance at which I have all along aimed in this argument. This proof I shall attempt by Scripture.

In the commencement of this volume, I have spoken largely of the Divine Power, operating in the ma-

thor,* with a saying of Sir Isaac Newton, which he is reported to have uttered a little before he died; and which shows his modest opinion of himself and his discoveries in Natural Philosophy.

"I dont know what I may seem to the world, but, as to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, *whilst the great ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before me.*"

See Spence's Anecdotes, by S. W. Singer, page 54.

terial universe, as the hidden spring of the wonderful works carried on in the vast scheme, in blind obedience to the Great First Cause; and throughout the kingdoms of animated nature, as the fountain of that *unconscious* intelligence, if I may be allowed such an expression, which is displayed, with more or less wisdom and design, in every tribe and family of the brute creation.

I have latterly taken occasion to speak of the Holy Spirit under different appellations, as the medium by which Divine Intelligence is not only conveyed to the soul of man, but produces in his life and conduct, when properly submitted to, the fruits of undefiled Religion.

I have now to say a few words on the name and spirit of Christ, or the Divine Word, as the same in power and heavenly nature with the eternal wisdom of God, and with the influence of the Holy Spirit of Grace and Truth.

In endeavouring to elucidate this point, I shall observe the following order.

First,—I shall produce the evidence from Scripture, which seems fully to establish the identity of operation in question:

Secondly,—I shall consider what evidence the Scripture contains of the existence of Christ's Spirit in godly men, before his personal appearance amongst the Jews, and outward manifestation to the world:—and thirdly, I shall subjoin a very

few testimonies from Christian writers to the same purpose.

I. With reference to the first object, I have collected a number of Scripture texts, which are disposed in a kind of tabular order. In presenting a subject of so sacred a character in such a form, I feel some apology to be necessary, lest it should appear that I was disposed to treat it in a way that bore any resemblance to that in which the common subjects of natural research are used to be illustrated. I am, on the contrary, persuaded, that the sublime truths of Revealed Religion, and especially those, which regard the nature and operation of the Godhead—that mysterious Power which is incomprehensible, because *infinite*, in every perfection of which man sees and knows but a little part—cannot be brought under our notice and handled like the common topics of human inquiry, without weakening in some degree that holy reverence in which these sublime truths ought invariably to be held.

From this synoptical view, I presume to think, that the harmony, union, and identity of operation, in all the Divine works, of the Almighty Father, the Anointed Messiah, his eternal Word, and the Holy Spirit, will be strikingly manifested. And I am the more reconciled to the form; because it embraces nothing of my own, and presents the simple unencumbered truth in Scripture language. Indeed, I believe, there are many Scripture truths,—and this is one of the

most sublime that can be contemplated by men or Angels—in their nature so refined, elevated, and incomprehensible, that an attempt to clothe them in any other language than Scripture authorizes, will rather serve to show the weakness and presumption of man than to unfold the least of the hidden mysteries of Divine Truth. And while I have been engaged in preparing this table, I have been forcibly struck with the idea that the serious contemplation of such a view must have a powerful tendency to check those disputes which have so much disturbed and alienated from each other the minds of Christians who profess to take Scripture for their Guide in matters of speculative Faith and Doctrine. For, if Scripture be received as authority, as it unquestionably ought to be, there can scarcely be any ground for difference of opinion on this important subject; so far as it can be brought within the comprehension of the human mind; i. e. circumscribing *opinion* within those limits, which can never be safely transgressed.

Scripture bears the clearest and most unanswerable testimony to ONE ONLY TRUE GOD, doing all things by his own eternal *Power, Wisdom, and Word*, CHRIST JESUS, the Rock of Ages, through the immediate influence and agency of the HOLY SPIRIT. There can be no sliding from this foundation, without setting up the deductions of human wisdom, limited, superficial, dark, and doubtful as it is, above the Divine revelations given to Patriarchs, Prophets,

and Apostles, from the beginning of the world, as well as above the express declarations of Christ himself.

If words of human invention, which Scripture does not contain, could have made the truth more clear than it is in Scripture, we should not have had the Christian world divided, as it has been, with an incalculable number of *distinctions* and *designations*; which, it may perhaps confidently be said, have never yet contributed to practical piety. For, disputing about words, and differing about nominal distinctions, they lose the substance; and thus the Divine life is wounded in all who make their religion to consist in vain disputations, which go beyond the written letter, about things that are placed as far above human research, as the heavens are above the earth.

And it is highly probable that the adoption of one distinguishing epithet or *denomination*, has driven many speculative men, who could not see the thing so distinctly as a supposed orthodoxy founded upon arbitrary terms would require of them, to enrol themselves with the very opposite *denomination*.

The Table simply consists of three columns. In the first column are collected from Scripture certain acts *predicated* of God: in the second and third, horizontally with the first, the same or parallel acts *predicated* of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

Where there is an omission in the first column, a coincidence may be seen in the second and third.

For an account of the objects of this Table, consult pages 533—535.

he beginning GOD *created* the heaven and earth. Gen. 1. 1.	All things were *made* by HIM. John 1. 3. God, who *created* all things by JESUS CHRIST. Ephes. 3. 10. See Colos. 1. 16.	By his SPIRIT he hath garnished the heavens. Job 26. 13. Thou sendest forth thy SPIRIT; they are *created*, and thou renewest the face of the earth. Psalm 194. 30. The SPIRIT *of God* moved upon the face of the waters. Gen. 1. 2.
GOD is *Light*. 1 John 1. 5. The LORD is my *Light*. Psalm 27. 1.	I am the *Light* of the world. John 8. 12. THE SAME was that true *Light* that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. John 1. 9. CHRIST shall give thee *light*. Ephe. 3. 10.	A *manifestation of the* SPIRIT is given to every man to profit withal. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Whatsoever doth make *manifest* is *Light*. Ephes. 5. 13.
The LORD is the God of *Truth*. Jer. 10. 10.	I am the way, the *Truth*, and the Life. John 14. 6. Grace and *Truth* came by JESUS CHRIST. John 1. 17.	The SPIRIT is *Truth*. 1 John 5. 6. The SPIRIT of Truth will guide you into all *Truth*. John 16. 13.
The LORD is my *Shepherd*. Psalm 23. 1. HE *leadeth* me beside the still waters. HE *guided* them in the wilderness like a flock. SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL, thou that *leadest* Joseph like a flock. Ps. 78. 52. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Ps. 37. 23.	I am the good *Shepherd*. John 1. 14. Our LORD JESUS, that great *Shepherd* of the sheep. Heb. 13. 20. The LAMB which is in the midst of the throne shall *feed* them, and shall *lead* them unto living fountains of waters. Rev. 7. 17.	As many as are *led* by the SPIRIT of God they are the Sons of God. Rom. 8. 14. If ye be *led* by the SPIRIT, ye are not under the law. Gal. 5. 18. Jesus was *led* by the SPIRIT. Mat. 4. 1.
The *word* that GOD *putteth* in my *mouth* that will I speak. Numb. 22. 38. And I will *put* my *words* in his *mouth*. Deut. 18. 18. What the LORD *saith* unto me that will I speak. 1 Kings 22. 14.	Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For *I will give you a mouth and wisdom*. Luke 21. 15. Since ye seek a proof of CHRIST *speaking in me*. 2 Cor. 13. 3.	It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the SPIRIT *of your Father* (HOLY GHOST, Mark 13. 11.) *that speaketh in you*. Mat. 10. 20. 21.

GOD is my *witness*, whom I serve. Rom. 1. 9.
The FATHER who sent me hath *borne witness* of me. John 5. 37.
I will be a swift *witness* against the sorcerers, &c. saith the LORD. Mal. 3. 5.
GOD also bearing them *witness*. Heb. 2. 4.

JESUS CHRIST, who is the faithful *witness*. Rev. 1. 5.
Write these things, saith the true *witness*. Rev. 3. 14.

It is the SPIRIT that *beareth witness*. John 5. 6.
The SPIRIT *beareth witness* with our Spirits. Rom. 8. 16.
The HOLY GHOST *witnesseth* in every city. Acts 20. 23.
My conscience *bearing me witness* in the Holy Ghost. Rom. 9. 1.

Ye are the *temple* of the living God. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

Ye are the *body* of CHRIST. 1. Cor. 6. 27.
Know ye not that your *bodies* are members of CHRIST? 1 Cor. 6. 15.
Know ye not yourselves that JESUS is *in you* except ye be reprobates? 2 Cor. 13. 5.

Your body is the *temple* of the HOLY GHOST. 1 Cor. 6. 19.

The breath of the ALMIGHTY hath given me *life*. Job. 33. 4.
For with THEE is *the fountain of life*. Ps. 36. 9.

I am the resurrection and the *life*. John 11. 25.
CHRIST who is our *life*. Col. 3. 4.
He that hath the SON hath *life*. 1 John 5. 12.

The SPIRIT giveth *life*. 2 Cor. 3. 6.
The SPIRIT is *life*. Rom. 8. 10.

It is GOD that *worketh in you* to will and to do. Phil. 2. 13.
It is the same GOD that *worketh all in all*. 1 Cor. 12. 6.
GOD *wrought* special miracles by the hand of Paul. Acts 19. 11.

My Father worketh hitherto, and *I work*—verily I say unto you—the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for whatsoever things He doeth, these also doeth the SON likewise. John 5. 17. 19.
By what *power*, or by what name, have ye done this?—By the *name* of JESUS CHRIST—doth this man *stand* before you *whole*. Acts 4. 7. 10.
All power is given to ME in Heaven and on earth. Mat. 28. 18.
I give you power to tread on Serpents—nothing shall harm you. Luke 16. 19.

All these (Wisdom—Knowledge—Faith—Gifts of Healing—Miracles—Prophecy—divers kinds of tongues, &c.) *worketh* that one and the self-same SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as he will. 1 Cor. 12. 11.
For I will not dare to speak of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, through mighty signs and wonders by the power of the SPIRIT of God. Rom. 15, 19.

Their *Righteousness* is of ME, saith the LORD. Isa. 54. 17. In the LORD is all *Righteousness*. Isa. 45. 23.	In CHRIST, who of God is made unto us *Righteousness*. 1. Cor. 1. 30. Being filled with the fruits of *Righteousness* by JESUS. Phil. 1. 11.	The fruit of the SPIRIT is in all *Righteousness*. Ephes. 5. 9.
There is a GOD in Heaven that *revealeth* secrets. Dan. 2. 28. HE *revealeth* his secrets to his Servants the prophets. Amos. 3, 7.	Neither was I taught it but by the *Revelation* of JESUS CHRIST. Gal. 1. 12.	God hath *revealed* them to us by his SPIRIT. 1 Cor. 2. 10.
GOD who is rich in mercy *quickened us*. Eph. 2. 4. The FATHER raiseth up the dead and *quickeneth* them. John 5. 21.	The SON *quickeneth* whom he will. John 5. 21. The LAST ADAM—a *quickening* Spirit. 1 Cor. 15. 45.	It is the SPIRIT that *quickeneth*. John 6. 63.
It is GOD that *justifieth*. Rom. 8. 33.	Ye are *justified* in the name of the LORD JESUS. 1 Cor. 6. 11.	*Justified* in the SPIRIT. 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Justified* by his GRACE. Tit. 3. 7.
To them that are *sanctified* by GOD the Father. Jude 1.	CHRIST, who of God is made unto us *sanctification*. 1 Cor. 1. 30. To them that are *sanctified* in CHRIST JESUS. 1 Cor. 1. 2.	Being *sanctified* by the HOLY GHOST. Rom. 25. 10. Through *sanctification* of the SPIRIT. 1 Peter, 1. 2.
I am the LORD, beside ME there is no *Saviour*. Isa. 43. 11. To the only wise GOD, our *Saviour*, be Glory. Jude 25. The living GOD who is the *Saviour* of all men. 1 Tim. 4. 10.	This is CHRIST, the *Saviour* of the world. John 4. 42. The Father sent the SON to be the *Saviour* of the world. 1 John 4. 14. There is none other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be *saved*. Acts 4. 12.	He *saved* us by the renewing of the HOLY GHOST. Tit. 3. 5. By GRACE are ye *saved* through faith. Ephes. 2. 8.
GOD is my *salvation*. Isa. 12. 2.	*Salvation* by our LORD JESUS—the Captain of *Salvation*—the author of eternal *Salvation*. 1 Thes. 5. 9. Heb. 2. 10. & 5. 9.	The GRACE of God that bringeth *Salvation*. Tit. 2. 11.

The worlds were framed by the *word* of GOD. Heb. 11. 3. THY *word* quickened me. Psal. 119. 50. The *word* of GOD is quick and powerful. Heb. 4. 12. The *word* was GOD. John 1. 1.	Let the *word* of CHRIST dwell in you richly. The *word* was made flesh and dwelt among us. John 1. 14. HIS NAME is called the *word* of God. Rev. 19. 13.	Take the —— sword of the SPIRIT, which is the *word* of God. Eph. 6. 17.
Give ear to the *Law* of our GOD. Isa. 1. 10. I will put MY *Laws* into their hearts. Heb. 10. 16.	Hear ye, and so fulfil the *law* of CHRIST. Gal. 6. 2.	The *law written in their hearts*. Rom. 2. 15. Ye are our epistle written in our hearts—manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, *written* not with ink, but with the SPIRIT of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart. 2 Cor. 3. 3.
Our *sufficiency* is of GOD. 2 Cor. 3. 5. The LORD is my *helper*. Heb. 13. 16.	Without ME, ye can *do nothing*. John 15. 5. I can *do* all things through CHRIST, who strengtheneth me. Phil. 4. 13.	The SPIRIT also *helpeth* our infirmities. Rom. 8. 26. MY GRACE is *sufficient* for thee. 2 Cor. 12. 9.
As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the *Sons of* GOD. Rom. 8. 14. Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby *we cry* ABBA, FATHER. Rom. 8. 15.	Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his SON into your hearts, *crying* ABBA, FATHER. Gal. 4. 6.	No man *can say* that Jesus Christ is the Lord but by the HOLY GHOST. 1 Cor. 12. 3.
The *foundation* of GOD standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Ye are GOD'S *building*. 1 Cor. 3. 9.	For, other *foundation* can no man lay than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST. 1 Cor. 3. 11.	Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone—In whom ye also are builded together for an *habitation* of God through the SPIRIT. Ephes. 2. 20. 22.
There are *diversities of operations*, but it is THE SAME GOD which worketh all in all. 1 Cor. 12. 6.	And there are *diversities of administrations*, but THE SAME LORD. 1 Cor. 12. 5.	There are *diversities of gifts*, but THE SAME SPIRIT. 1 Cor. 12. 4.

No man, saith Christ, can come to me except THE FATHER, which hath sent me, *draw him.* John 6. 44.	We have peace with God through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM also *we have access* unto this Grace. Rom. 5. 2. CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD, in whom also *we have boldness and access* with confidence by the faith of him. Ephes. 3. 11.	We *have access* by ONE SPIRIT to the Father, Eph. 2, 18.
	CHRIST who also *maketh intercession* for them. Rom. 8. 34. HE (Jesus) ever liveth to *make intercession* for us. Heb. 7. 25.	But the SPIRIT *maketh intercession* for us. Rom. 8, 26.
	I *proceeded forth* and came from God. John 8. 42.	The SPIRIT OF TRUTH which *proceedeth* from the Father. John 15, 26.
Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, GOD *dwelleth* in *him* and he in God. 1 John 4. 15. GOD said, I will *dwell in them*, and *walk in them.* 2 Cor. 6. 16.	I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man: that CHRIST may *dwell* in your hearts by faith. Ephes. 3. 14.	Hereby we know that Christ abideth in us by THE SPIRIT which he hath given us. 1 John 3. 24. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the SPIRIT of God *dwelleth* in you. 1 Cor. 3. 16. and see Rom. 8. 11.
I the LORD *search the heart.* Jer. 17. 10.	HE that *searcheth the hearts* knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God. Rom. 8. 27.	The SPIRIT *searcheth* all things. 1 Cor. 2. 10.
The *revelation* of Jesus Christ which GOD gave unto him—and sent and signified it by his servant John. Rev. 1. 1.	I JESUS have sent mine Angel *to testify* unto you these things in the churches. Rev. 22. 16.	Let him that hath an ear, hear what the SPIRIT *saith* unto the churches. Rev. 2. 7.

The preceding table scarcely requires any comment. From Genesis to Revelations, it shows a remarkable coincidence and harmony of operation in the Almighty Father, the Messiah, his Anointed Son, and the Holy Spirit. But it is a truth too grave and solemn for the human mind to meddle with, or even to attempt to state in different terms from those used in Scripture, lest, in the attempt, any one should appear *to be wise above that which is written.* I therefore feel some anxiety that the expression, *harmony of operation,* may not be misconstrued. I wish the Truth of Scripture to stand on its own foundation, and to shine by its own light. And, I presume, it would be difficult to use any form of words, that would more strongly express this fundamental Truth, than those which are employed in Scripture itself, particularly in the examples I have selected. Yet much ingenuity has been exercised, on the one hand, to bring this Truth more within the grasp of the human intellect; and on the other, to reason away the import of the Scripture terms used to set it forth. Extravagant attempts of this sort only show the weakness and vanity of the human mind; and one extreme of opinion leads or drives to another.

When men, professing to be sound in Faith, fabricate unintelligible mysteries, they turn away those, who are resolved to use their reason, from the very foundation itself. And, accordingly, what is denominated an Enlightened System of Christianity, which admits of nothing but what is obvious to Reason, and

'at the same time robs the Christian Religion of its spirituality, or in the words of Dr. Watts, "sinks the glories of the Gospel Dispensation below its original design," has been proposed to the inquirer after Truth for his acceptance, with a specious shew of liberality, —a system which has led more to Deism and entire self-dependence in the work of Religion, than to the pure vital spirit of the Gospel.

And we may perceive the dilemma in which not only those are placed, who, professing themselves Deists, assert what they call "a natural Conscience to be sufficient, and Christianity to be as old as the Creation," without any miraculous and super-natural display of the Divine will to benighted mankind; and yet deny an operative internal Spirit of God— viz. that of Jesus Christ to be universally diffused amongst men: but those also, who, professing themselves Christians, assert a revelation from above to be necessary to the work of Salvation, and to include in its design, universally Jews and Gentiles; and yet confine this revelation, with its benefits, to the medium and local influence of a Written Record. The first make nothing of that omnipotent effective *Word*, in the beginning with God, without which no blessing, moral or physical, ever was, or can be attained; and the last nullify in effect the Spirituality of the Gospel Dispensation, which came to direct mankind from types and ceremonies, and written ordinances, to the living eternal substance of all true Religion—to *the law written in the heart*,—to *the kingdom of Heaven*

within them,—to *the Grace of God which hath appeared unto all men*,—to *the anointing that needeth no man's teaching*,—to *the spirit that quickeneth*,—to *the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*,—to *the implanted word, the incorruptible seed*,—to CHRIST WITHIN, *the Hope of Glory, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God*,—THE WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, AND THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

After what has been said, I apprehend, it will scarcely be necessary for me to attempt to prove, that the Spirit was in all the Lord's Prophets, and operated, before the outward appearance of Christ, in the hearts of men universally, by its immediate power. For it is clearly implied in Scripture that the spirit of God strove with the rebellious, so long as their thoughts and imaginations were not wholly turned to evil; and that it dwelt with the righteous as their director and comforter from the beginning. On the latter head we have the most ample testimony from some of the Prophets themselves.

"The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me," saith Isaiah. 48. 16. "The Spirit entered into me when he spake to me," saith Ezekiel. 2. 2. 3. 24. Of Daniel it was testified (by a heathen indeed), that "in him was the Spirit of the Holy Gods." Dan. 4. 8.

The Psalms of David sufficiently proclaim, that he was under the same Divine influence. He prays that the Holy Spirit may not be withdrawn; petitions for its return; supplicates for its Divine aid; and rejoices

in its holy consolations. Moreover, Christ himself declares, that "David *in spirit* calleth him Lord." Mat. 22. 43.

"For many years," says Nehemiah, "didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them *by thy spirit* in thy prophets." Nehem. 9. 30. And Zechariah, "The words which the Lord of Hosts hath sent *in his Spirit* by the former prophets." Ch. 7. 12. These examples are sufficient to show that, it was by the Spirit, God revealed his will to the Prophets.

It is clear, therefore, that the passage in John, where he says, "*the Spirit was not yet come*," cannot possibly mean the actual commencement of Divine Revelation by the Spirit; but must refer to that extraordinary effusion of this heavenly gift which took place on the day of Pentecost, that was promised to the disciples by their Lord and Master on the eve of his crucifixion; and perhaps to the Gospel Dispensation, as a spiritual one, *open* to all men, contrasted with the ceremonial and partial dispensation of the Law. Indeed, it is clear, that every *renewed* influence of the Spirit was considered a *new* gift: and that no true spiritual gift could be *retained* but by watching and prayer. It appears to have been long after Jesus had endowed his disciples with power to cast out evil spirits, and that some of them, having proved its efficacy, returned to him, in the joy of their hearts, saying "the devils are subject to us through thy name," that they relapsed into *unbelief*, so that they were not able to heal the young man who was a

lunatic: and their master told them, with a reproof, that it was because of their unbelief; for that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting:"—this miracle cannot be performed but by a renewed act of Faith, and by watching unto prayer.

II. With reference to the second point—the pre-existence of Christ in his spiritual character, though it might be clearly established, by inference, from the Table; yet we have the direct testimony of Christ himself, as recorded by the four Evangelists, and allusions to it by two of the Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Christ saith, "I and my Father are one." John 10. 38; and again, "*Verily, verily* I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." John 8. 58.

He also interrogates the Scribes and Pharisees respecting his Divine nature in these words: "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord, saying, 'sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool?' If David then call him Lord, *how is he is son?*"

We may perceive—and it is somewhat remarkable—that this was one of the last of those questions put to his enemies, which brought them to a stand, so that they *could not answer him a word.* And as it appeared to be his design that men should judge for themselves *by inference* from his miracles, whether he was the Messiah or not; so it appears to have been his design that they should judge *by inference* from the prophecy

of David, whether the Messiah was anterior to David or not, that is, in the beginning with God: and he urged the same truth more strongly in that declaration, that *he was before Abraham*; in order that they might clearly infer, he and the Messiah were *one*.

As if it had been said, The miracles which I do, prove that I am the Messiah; yet ye will not believe. David, by the spirit, calls the Messiah 'his Lord;' yet ye will not believe the Prophet. I myself declare that I was before Abraham; yet ye will not believe that I am the Christ, who, I have shewn you, was before David;—that I am truly the Messiah,—*that Seed* promised to Adam, seen in the prophetic vision by Abraham, and foretold by Moses—appointed to restore the world from Sin,—to bring life and immortality to light,—to point out the way to salvation by the Cross,—to be the Messenger of Grace and Truth —sent to preach deliverance to the captive, and to the poor the glad tidings of the Gospel of Peace.

This is, therefore, a truth, which, we may surely believe, cannot now be controverted, without seeking to rob "*the express Image of God*" of his Divine honour, and of "*that eternal glory*," which he himself declared, "*he had with the Father before the world was*." John 17. 5.

In the Revelations, Christ also declares himself to be the "*Root*" as well as "the *Offspring*, of David."

But, further, if Christ be the "*Power and Wisdom of God*," and "the Word of God" by whom all

things were made, as the Evangelist testifies, as well as the Apostle Paul, it is absurd to argue for the commencement of his spiritual existence, at the time of his outward manifestation *in the flesh.*

The Apostle Peter bears testimony to the same truth when he says: "Of which Salvation the Prophets have inquired, who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time *the Spirit of Christ which was in them,* did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ." 1. 1. 10, 11.

Paul also says, "They (the fathers) did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them: and *that Rock was Christ.*" 1 Cor. 10. 4.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find the expression, "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. 13. 8.

III. I do not suppose that the opinions of any professing Christians, who have written since the time of the Apostles, can add weight to the doctrines contained in the new Testament: nevertheless, it may be satisfactory to some to see how this subject has been viewed by enlightened men in different ages.

It is said of Justin Martyr, who is thought to have had his instruction from Polycarp, the disciple of the Evangelist John, that he understood by the term *Logos* or '*word*' of this Evangelist, not the reasoning faculty of the human mind, but the emanating *reason* of the Divine nature. This Divine

reason he conceived to have inspired the Hebrew Prophets, *and to have been the Christ*, who appeared in flesh. He supposed it to have been participated not only by the Hebrew patriarchs, but by the more excellent Pagan philosophers. Having been a Platonist before his conversion to Christianity, he concluded that whatever was valuable in Platonism, had either been communicated to Plato by inspiration from the Logos, or had been transmitted by tradition from Moses and the Hebrew prophets, and might therefore be justly claimed as belonging to Divine Revelation.*

"That blessed principle," says Penn,† in addressing his children, "the Eternal word, I began with to you, and which is that Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth, I have exhorted you to, in all its holy appearances or manifestations in yourselves, by which all things were at first made, and men enlightened to salvation, is Pythagoras's great Light and Salt of Ages; Anaxagoras's Divine Mind; Socrates's good Spirit; Timæus's unbegotten Principle and Author of all Light; Hieron's God in Man; Plato's eternal, ineffable, and perfect Principle of Truth; Zeno's Maker and Father of all; and Plotin's Root of the Soul: who, as they thus styled the eternal word, so the appearance of it in man wanted not very significant words. A domestic God, or God within, says Hieron, Pythagoras, Epictetus, and Seneca; Genius,

* See General Biography, vol. 5. Art. Justin.

† See Fruits of a Father's Love, § 13.

Angel, or Guide, says Socrates and Timæu the Light and Spirit of God, says Plato; the Divine Principle in man, says Plotin; the Divine Power and Reason, the infallible immortal Law in the minds of Men, says Philo; and the Law and living Rule of the mind, the interior Guide of the Soul, and everlasting Foundation of Virtue, says Plutarch."

The following passage from Cowper is likewise so apposite to my purpose, that I cannot deprive myself of the pleasure of quoting it.

" The Lord of all, himself through all diffus'd,
Sustains, and is the life of all that lives,
Nature is but a name for an effect,
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire,
By which the mighty process is maintained,
Who sleeps not, is not weary: in whose sight,
Slow circling ages are as transient days;
Whose work is without labour; whose designs
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts:
And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.
Him blind antiquity profan'd, not serv'd,
With self-taught rites, and under various names,
Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
And Flora, and Vertumnus; peopling Earth
With tutelary Goddesses and Gods,
That were not, and commending as they would
To each some province, garden, field, or grove.
But all are under One. One Spirit—His
Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,
Rules universal nature. Not a flower

Bnt shews some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,
Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odours, and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands
The forms, with which he sprinkles all the earth.
Happy who walks with Him! whom what he finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In Nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade, that twinkles in the Sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God."*

It does not seem to be necessary that I should say more on this part of my subject. To prove the Proposition, we have the testimony of enlightened men confirmed by Scripture; and I know not that we can establish a Truth of this nature on more solid grounds.

After what has been said, therefore, in the preceding pages, we may, I think, adopt this general conclusion—that as the unprejudiced, uncorrupted dictates of what is called a Moral Faculty, Sense, or Principle, or Conscience, (taken in its comprehensive meaning), may be resolved into true spiritual manifestations, or immediate Divine Revelations, and are identified with the *limited* effusions of the Holy Spirit in the ordinary state of mankind, universally; so the inference seems to be warranted from Scripture that all Spiritual Manifestations, Divine Unc-

* Task, Book 6.

tion, Grace, or Illumination, may be resolved into the heartfelt operation of the Virtue, Living Power, and Influence of Christ; and, lastly, the Revelations of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are resolvable into the will and counsel of one Eternal omniscient God, and Almighty Creator of the Universe.

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